

*Wm. de Vries*  
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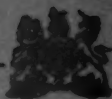
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APRIL, 1925.

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VOLUME VI.

NUMBER 2

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## GIACOMO PUCCINI and FERRUCCIO BUSONI

IF the reader of a daily paper on learning of the death of Puccini had turned to the "Encyclopedia Britannica" for an appreciation of the composer's work, his curiosity would have been disappointed. For the editors have given Puccini a bare dozen lines—a third of the space devoted to Johann Strauss, and less than was deemed adequate for Herr Ludwig Strauss, sometime leader of the Halle Orchestra, whose chief merit appears to have been a "power of self effacement in ensemble of a piece with a gentle disposition." Now, we know that it is almost impossible to gauge accurately space in a dictionary; we know that it is difficult to persuade an expert that his opinion of one composer may be too high, or too low of another; we know how a contributor must feel when he considers that a few years, nay, a few months, may prove him to have been blinded by superficial brilliancy or swayed by plausible argument. But when all has been said for the inevitability of errors, the discrepancy remains flagrant. Further, no less an authority than Sir Henry Hadow, in his recent history of music (Home University Library), has nothing more to tell of Puccini than this: "'Madame Butterfly' and 'The Girl of the Golden West' . . . have lost their way between the consulate and the counting-house." In the face of these facts the question arises—Is it really true that Puccini only followed the advice of the German writer and treated the public like "Frauenzimmer"; is his worth in the art of music just a third of that of Johann Strauss?

It would be absurd to maintain that because Puccini could fill the theatres he was a great musician. He said himself, with admirable modesty, that he was a composer of minor things—"Musiciata di Cose

*Minori.*" Neither his life nor his art had any real element of greatness. He had probably no definite conception of opera and all he asked of the libretto was that it should satisfy his instinct for the theatre. His life was simple enough, but it had not the simplicity which in the case of Verdi reaches almost to sublimity. As far as we know even the shadow of tragedy never touched him and if he loved of all things the solitude of his country house at Torre del Lago, near Varese, it was not because he scorned the pomp of the great world but because quiet and solitude were essential to him in his work. He could not work amidst the noise and the distraction of a great city. In the country instead, he found it easy to concentrate his thoughts and also to rest a tired mind. When the ideas did not flow easily the remedy was at hand—a dog, a gun, and, presumably, a hare or a brace of partridges. That was all the relaxation he needed. As for his art it was wholly that of the musician. In an age which has seen the fertilisation of music by poetry and philosophy and the attempted fertilisation by logic and mathematics he could not conceive music except in terms of lyricism. Those who talk glibly of the influence of Wagner on the later operas of Verdi ignore the fact that the real Wagner was all but unknown in Italy until about thirty years ago, when two memorable performances of the "Valkyrie" at Milan and Trieste revealed to Italian audiences the difference between the "Ring" and "Lohengrin" and "Tannhauser." The generation of Mascagni, Leoncavallo and Puccini was taught harmony on the figured bass of Fenaroli, and counterpoint according to Cherubini. In practice they had before them the example of Verdi, Boito, and of the French schools, represented by Ambroise Thomas and Massenet. Symphonic concerts and quartet concerts were not too frequent—certainly not frequent enough to influence in any way the main stream of Italian musical life. Puccini could not have learnt Wagnerian theories from his teachers. Ponchielli adhered completely to the Italian tradition in *Gioconda*, and Soffredini for whom the trio of Verdi's *I Lombardi* was "truly divine," could lament in Falstaff the absence of "those melodic surprises, neat and spontaneous" so characteristic of Verdi. How far critics were then from anything like a true appreciation of Wagnerian art may be seen by the importance they attached to the rôle of the orchestra in Falstaff, which they ascribed to Wagnerian influence—as if descriptive music were a discovery of the nineteenth century! Of the real value of Wagnerian art, of its massive contrapuntal structure, of its symphonic design, of its epic soul, neither the young Puccini nor his teachers had a notion.

It may be questioned, however, whether a more catholic education could have altered his outlook. His sympathies have never been



kindled by lofty themes. His heroines—there are no heroes in Puccini's operas—are all lowly, passionate, but not particularly intelligent beings, upon whom falls heavily undeserved punishment. To these he gave his heart. His operas stand to the operas of Verdi as the novel of Murger stands to the romanticism of Hugo. To measure him by any other standard is equivalent to applying to fiction the tests proper to poetry. He must be considered as he was; it is useless to attack him because he was not what he never intended to be. His success was commensurate with his artistic status. A popular novelist will always appeal to a wider public than a poet. He never intended to play for safety, for popularity and a substantial income—such accusations could only be made by those who envy either his facile success or his facile talent. He was sincere according to his lights. There is room enough in the world of music for all, for the great tragedian as for the composer of comedy, for the Titan as for the humble writer of popular songs. What we are entitled to ask is that the work should be good of its kind. Now although we are ourselves of Puccini's time and his last word has not yet been said—for *Turandot* still awaits its first performance—there seems to be no reason why those who applauded *Bohème* to the skies should be written down fools. Taken all in all it is the best opera of its kind our generation has produced, and it remains the best opera Puccini has written.

*Bohème* is the work of a man who can both feel deeply and express convincingly his emotion once it has found congenial stimulus. And this we should place as the first and most important qualification of the composer of dramatic music. Unlike Verdi, who could feel as deeply the sorrows of the shadowy personages of *La Forza del Destino* or of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and of a great tragic figure like Othello, unlike Wagner whose imagination glowed equally at the call of mystic resignation or of triumphant youth, Puccini could feel deeply only one passion—one only of the many dramatic conflicts which since time immemorial have inspired those who have written for the theatre. Manon, Mimi, Musetta, Butterfly and Tosca—they all bear an unmistakable family likeness. Had Verdi never written "*Traviata*" and had Puccini been offered "*La Dame aux Camellias*," he would undoubtedly have taken it to his heart. It may seem odd that *filles de joie* should excite such a fascination. But we must not forget that in the 'nineties the theme—imported from France—had a great vogue in Italy. "*Traviata*" had passed her prime, but Massenet's *Manon* delighted Italian audiences, while on the dramatic stage "*La Dame aux Camellias*" was Duse's most famous impersonation. Poetry, moreover, found in Olindo Guerrini a passionate exponent of the art which makes a boast of its truth

and its sensitiveness while being utterly impervious to the truth of life as a whole and to the finer reach and sensitiveness of greater art. Guerrini's fame was short lived. But for a time he exercised a deeper influence on impressionable young people than his infinitely greater contemporary, Carducci.

Be this as it may, the fact remains that Mimi called forth all that was best in Puccini and all he had to give—melody of great warmth, spontaneous, individual, harmonised with considerable ability and skilfully orchestrated. And he reflects perfectly the unhealthy atmosphere, the somewhat sordid nature of the play. Most effective is the contrast with the comic elements. How admirably Puccini portrayed each comic character! The encounter between the Bohemians and the landlord bristles with good points—most of them, unfortunately, lost when the translation of the text is inadequate; points which imply not only a fine sense of humour, but also a rare talent for using the musician's tools for a humorous purpose. It is a great pity that this side of Puccini's talent was allowed afterwards to lie dormant so long. Who would not willingly exchange *Tosca* or *Butterfly* for another *Gianni Schicchi*? Add to this an unerring sense of proportion, a flair for effective situations, a buoyant vitality, and the success which has been the happy lot of *Bohème* is easily explained. Moreover, we smile to-day at the consecutive fifths which open the second act and the consecutive fifths which in the third are meant to represent the light flakes of snow. Such tricks are trifles by the side of even the most modest achievements of the modern. But in 1896, when *Bohème* was first produced, they gave an air to the whole structure which it was thought stood, if not for revolution, for freedom and evolution; a daring subject treated in a daring fashion.

Of course, it is all hopelessly sentimental. But it is not easy to draw a firm line of demarcation between sentiment and sentimentality. Often what is pathos to one generation may be bathos to the next. We find Richardson sentimental, yet his sentimentality did not prevent Diderot from answering questions of personal interest with a rapturous "O! mes amis, *Pamela*!" nor Lady Mary Wortley Montagu from admitting that she sobbed "scandalously" over *Clarissa Harlowe*. If the story affects us, if we find in it genuine human feeling, then its author—writer or composer—has achieved his end. His true intent is all for our delight, and there exist many people whose greatest pleasure is to shed a happy tear or two and weep for fictitious personages as they will never weep for real human beings. The composer is to be blamed when he sets out to make you weep and succeeds only in arousing disgust at his impotence. That is the case of Puccini in *Tosca*.

Like *Bohème*, *Tosca* has met with the approval of the great public of European opera houses. Perhaps it is considered even more of a "draw" than *Bohème*. It was chosen to represent Puccini at the Paris opera after the ban occasioned by his refusal to sign an indictment of German music and German art in the early days of the war. It was chosen again lately in Berlin to commemorate his death. Public favour in this instance rests entirely on the combination of a theatrical libretto and the opportunities the composer has given his interpreters for the display of melodramatic phrases and action. It is Sardouledom naked and unashamed. If one analyses the emotions aroused by such an opera they will be found to be precisely those excited by a street accident. It is melodrama accompanied by music which only once in the whole of the three acts rises to anything like humanity and real warmth. Elsewhere everything goes "according to plan." The recipe which worked such wonders in *Bohème* is used over again after the passion has cooled, the funeral baked meats of Mimi coldly furnishing forth the love banquet of *Tosca* and *Cavaradossi*. Melody in the strings, support in the wind, a light pizzicato in the basses and arpeggio in the harp. These are the ingredients. When these instruments in the orchestra prepare to combine, the spectator knows what to expect, no matter whether the situation represents a love scene or *Tosca* wrestling with Scarpia: the trick of a cunning improviser—not of a good composer. On one occasion one feels inclined to pull the author's ears for mentioning in the same breath Scarpia's fan and Jago's handkerchief. Twice we are moved to irresistible laughter—once when the arch villain, after having *Cavaradossi* stretched on the rack, turns to *Tosca* with the apology: "My poor little supper has been interrupted"; once when the platoon which is to shoot *Cavaradossi* advances to a tune which seems to re-echo the words of the old dancing master's: one-two, rise and turn; one-two, rise and turn. It consists of a short phrase of two bars in two-four time with a group of six notes on the first beat of the second bar. Whenever I hear those six notes I seem to see the whole firing party rise on their toes and perform a neat 'bout turn—a strange preparation for the execution of a capital sentence. Has anyone ever felt pity for *Cavaradossi* and *Tosca* as one felt for *Rodolfo* and *Mimi*? I confess that I feel none even though in the third act, after marking time during the somewhat futile orchestral prelude, *Caruso* has sung his aria as well as it possibly can be sung. *Cavaradossi* is far too much of a swaggerer to enlist my sympathies. But we are concerned with music and not drama, and these faults have their origin in the play rather than in the music. When Puccini chose *Tosca* his musical faculties were obviously tired and only his sense of the stage was alert. There is not much character

in the ensemble pieces and the opening of the third act, when the orchestra is supposed to describe a Roman dawn, does not go beyond the level of good student work. The chief merit of Puccini in *Tosca* lies in the way in which he has heightened the effect of the play by adding the gloomiest colours of his palette to the gloomy colours of the drama. Once only music lives its own life—when Cavaradossi hears that Napoleon has won and turns on Scarpia prophesying the fall of tyranny. It is only a matter of a few bars, but there unmistakably is genuine emotion.

The third and last of the completely successful serious operas, *Madame Butterfly*, contains some solid platitudes in the first act. The solemn fiasco on its first production can easily be ascribed to these. There is nothing elsewhere like the eagerness, the nervousness of an Italian audience at a first performance. Once such an audience is started on a certain path it is difficult to head them off. The love duet ought to have changed the fortunes of the day. It did not. But the misery of *Butterfly* in the second act brings back sometimes the eloquence of *Bohème* and the composer becomes human and convincing when he gives up the attempt to give a European turn to Japanese and American melodies. Lacking the genius of a Dvorák in this respect, he could make nothing of them and the supposition that they might give local colour was the mistake of a man who knew not his strength or his weakness.

The *Girl of the Golden West* is more interesting for us, not because it can boast of yet another plausible love duet, nor because in the first act it shows Puccini's utter inability to raise a commonplace tune to the point where it may acquire a certain artistic interest. Its value for the critic is in the attempt to give a more piquant, more modern turn to the harmonic schemes. From *Manon* to *Butterfly* there is no perceptible refining of methods. The style is riper and surer in *Bohème* than in *Manon*, but the technical equipment is essentially the same. The instrumental scherzo written long before *Bohème* was thought of and incorporated in the first scenes is, technically, as accomplished as anything he wrote up to 1904. By this time, however, many things had happened. Symphonic concerts had acquired greater popularity, the Wagner of *The Ring* and *Tristan* had triumphed and the influence of Debussy and the Russians was beginning to make itself felt amongst the younger generation. Puccini himself was attacked by critics who found his music lacking in virility and originality. As a matter of fact, Puccini was not a reactionary. He admired Richard Strauss, and probably studied his scores with some care. The result of those studies can be seen best in the group of three operas, known as the *Trittico*, the last of his works he saw on the stage. The process of revision was neither brief



nor easy. Nor was it altogether successful even in *Il Tabarro*. It meant a change of heart not of garments and Puccini was too deeply pledged to lyricism to understand not so much the technique as the spirit which inspired the revolutionaries. Lyricism had stood him in good stead in *Bohème*. He abused it in *Tosca* and in some scenes of *Butterfly*. For when Pinkerton returns to the bungalow of *Butterfly* after his marriage, the situation is far too tragic for such melodies as Sharpless's "I know that for such great sorrow" and Pinkerton's "Farewell." But on the whole it had been his trump card. Perhaps he grew tired himself of performing the same trick over and over again when, with the passing of time, the first raptures and the first enthusiasms had abated. The novelty, however, is on the surface. He could not respond to other themes than those of *Bohème* and *Butterfly*. He was not a man to feel the *Weltschmerz*, but an individualist, and his attempts at modernity led nowhere until *Gianni Schicchi* sent him back to comedy. There he found again the zest and the vigour of his young years and the one-act comedy has been praised, and justly praised, even by those who before had found him if not dull, conventional and unattractive. The public has seized upon the one lyrical morsel, the soprano aria *Babbino Caro*, in which they recognised the old Puccini dear to them. It is by far the least interesting page of the opera. It is slightly reminiscent of the flower duet in *Butterfly*, but the hand surely had lost some of its cunning. In the closing bars artificiality is apparent; the end seems to come not inevitably but simply because all things must have an end. One has only to compare it with the solos of Rodolfo and Mimi in the first act of *Bohème* to see the difference. We admire in *Gianni Schicchi* far more its fine vitality and resource. The cunning by which the bustling theme which opens the action becomes first, with a slow rhythm, the lamentation of the relatives of the late *Buodo*, and then starts with new impetus sending them all over the house to search for *Buodo's* will, is worthy of a great musician. If Puccini had learnt sooner the art of development, if he had studied the great classics and found out their secret for "working" a theme he need not have wasted his talent on the *Girl of the Golden West* or in trying to dilute over and over again and almost to vanishing point his fine gift for poignant, expressive melody. Perhaps *Turandot*, which was finished or almost finished when he died, will show the principle applied on a larger scale. The theme at any rate appears to promise new departures.

Apart from whatever surprise *Turandot* may have in store for us, Puccini's art was, in spite of very clear limitations, good and often excellent of its kind. And he was on the whole a most fortunate man. Fortunate in his swift rise to fame, for he had hardly finished

his studies when a great publisher came to his aid and saved him from routine work and the worst struggles of the impecunious composer. Fortunate in his interpreters, for Caruso and many another star of opera delighted in his music. Fortunate in the unswerving loyalty of his vast following, since *Bohème*, *Tosca* and *Butterfly* still fill the theatre. Fortunate in the great wealth he accumulated with only four operas and in the means it gave him to lead the life he loved best. Fortunate even in his death which came earlier than it was reasonable to expect, but swiftly, and saved him from the slow decay of old age and from the immense loneliness which embittered the last years of Verdi.

How different was the life of Ferruccio Busoni—also a Tuscan—perhaps one of the most complex and enigmatic personalities of our time, often compared to Liszt—another musician whose work still finds criticism divided in two camps. The comparison, however, is apt to lead us astray. Both Busoni and Liszt were performers of supreme ability, composers of individual views and accomplished editors. There the comparison ends. Liszt, who wore the habit of the abbé, was irresistibly drawn towards a mundane, brilliant ideal, while Busoni—an ascetic if ever there was one—for ever strove after some odd purity where passion was rigorously controlled. Sentiment was the kingdom of the one; reason of the other. Liszt was attracted by Verdi, as Busoni was attracted by Bach. Liszt was a star in a galaxy, while Busoni was a solitary figure. Of course he had friends, pupils and admirers, but there was no intimacy with his peers; there was, in his case, no Weimar, no patriotic impulse, no spiritual home to draw together men interested in a new school of thought and artistic effort. As we see him now he does not give the impression of having been born under a particularly lucky star.

Ferruccio Busoni began his career as a prodigy. His father, who together with his mother, supervised his early education, was something of a martinet and the boy had to submit to strict discipline. Perhaps his parents believed that a Spartan training is the best foundation of a manly character, whereas excessive severity is probably as bad a method of education as over-indulgence. The applause of the public may have flattered the young artist; but we live no longer in an era of improvisers, and experience has taught us to accept the wonders of precocious children with caution. It may be doubted whether these early successes made up for the many duties and the long labours they implied. Like the dutiful son he was, Busoni never complained of his young days. But one wonders what he might have done with a different training, which would not have made him do

in the way of duty that which he was ready to do as a labour of love, helped rather than forced his talents to grow, and at the same time, widened his horizon with other interests than those of music.

Certainly public applause had no influence on him, and he was never swayed by other people's opinions. Many years later he did not hesitate to refuse attractive engagements in order to retire and work quietly in seclusion until he had attained a degree of technical perfection greater perhaps than that of any other living pianist. When he appeared again before the public he had actually mastered all that can be included in the term technique. Others perform wonderful things and brilliant feats, in spite of difficulties of which the spectator is usually perfectly aware. When Busoni played, difficulties seemed completely to have disappeared. And often, with the difficulties, went the traditional and conventional notions of interpretation. He could do a wrong thing with the perfectly plausible air of a Bernard Shaw bent on proving that right is wrong and wrong right. He could play his own fantasia on *Carmen* without any emphasis from beginning to end, treating these highly charged themes impersonally and dispassionately as if they had never been connected with the theatre or with a dramatic situation. Yet the effect was not only magical, but convincing, and one felt like a schoolboy caught in flagrant error. He convinced us for the time being that all our preconceived notions of Bizet were wrong and that he alone held the key to the secret of the music. That is one aspect of his art as an interpreter, an art which was stamped with an individuality that had in it as much of the thinker and the philosopher as of the musician.

He commanded a wider range of tone than any living pianist, although his preference for cold, unemotional shades might have caused some to doubt it. One might think that he reasoned like Descartes, denying everything, doubting everything until he found the *cogito ergo sum*, the formula which could stand all tests and all arguments. It led him to a quality of tone which can only be called "white," a quality that was cold and almost inanimate. From this perfectly even basis he would start and build up a climax that reached the extreme limit of what is possible to a pianist, an avalanche of sound giving the impression of a red flame rising out of marble. His intellectual control was remorseless. Not once did he seem to trust to instinct or even to experience. None could claim to be familiar with his reading. He had always some unexpected turn of phrase, some surprise in store, some unexplored avenue to show us. One felt as if he were not interpreting another's thoughts or repeating a well considered conception, but building up there and then in accordance with a design whose details he carried in his mind. He

would play the theme of the slow movement of the "Emperor" absolutely without expression in the first bar, then suddenly make us gasp with the exquisite charm of the *gruppetto*, and from that moment on to ever more ravishing beauty of tone. And the "Emperor" suggests another consideration—rhythm, which with him was not that of the pianist taught from the beginning to be a law unto himself but rather that of the conductor; for, like a conductor, he never allowed the partiality of the instrument for certain types of phrase or its unfitness for others in the least to sway his course. The opening of the last movement, when he played it, had exactly the same firm, decided character and rhythm in the piano as in the orchestra. The difference between the Busoni reading and that of another great pianist may appear trifling, but it is just these trifles that occasionally make of a winged passage of Beethoven a thing of leaden feet. The iron grip of Busoni's rhythm gave his interpretations of Brahms concertos unique majesty and authority, and it had its share in revealing the virginal quality of Mozart.

The quest for an ideal of supreme excellence led him, as it was bound to do, to Bach, the giant with the heart of a child of whom, in spite of Spitta's patient labours we seem to know so little :

Others abide our questions. Thou art free.  
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,  
Out-topping knowledge.

Busoni's transcriptions of Bach are an enduring monument of an affection which was as intelligent as it was deep. And from transcriptions to original composition—the only field in which immortality can be won—is but a step. Busoni's compositions and theories of composition made a certain stir in his lifetime. They were discussed seriously by connoisseurs, although they left the public at large somewhat indifferent. While some were fascinated by his great command of resources others found that the "new" idiom estranged the listener and left him cold. At the present moment, as the obituary notices prove, we seem as far as ever from a general consensus of opinion. Some ignore his compositions almost entirely, while others foretell the coming of a great Busoni revival that must open our eyes to his real greatness. We are forced to rely on our experience and instinct since other guides can be accepted only with serious reservations. And in my opinion Busoni's music has a latent greatness which never quite reveals itself. The man seems greater than his music and the intention greater than the deed. He seems to lack something that once or twice came to much smaller men like Bruch or Bruckner! Skill, knowledge, lofty aim, even a certain depth—these are qualities



which his original compositions possess beyond question. They also fulfil completely the promise of the various studies and essays in which he set forth his theory of creative music. But the best systems are those which follow the music, and Busoni's theories give one the impression of having preceded the act of composition. A composer who explains his music resembles a lover who gives us reasons for loving. The true composer does not only believe in his music. His faith in his work is blind. Even though reason, commonsense and experience are against it, he must profess with Orlando that "From the East to Western Ind No jewel is like Rosalind." That is perhaps the reason why all the world who loves a lover comes in time to love a great composer. Moreover it may be permitted to doubt whether the wandering life of the successful pianist did not do something to make concentration on one object difficult. After the first successes, Busoni went for a while to Leipzig. Two years later he accepted an appointment at Helsingfors. In 1890 he taught in the Conservatorium at Moscow.

In 1891 we find him at Boston. On his return from America he held various appointments at Vienna, Berlin, Bologna, and again, after the war, at Berlin. The worry of continuous travel, the anxieties of the preparation of students, the thought and care given to the organisation of studies must surely have diverted his mind from what should have been the main goal of his existence. Busoni's music lacks sometimes not the unity of theory but the unity that a work of art derives from a potent, overmastering individuality. And, perhaps, it is too plausible, too well built, too logical to be loved or be judged as we love and judge music, which in some unaccountable way answers to a mood of the soul.

F. BONAVIA.

## MUSIC FOR TWO FLUTES WITHOUT BASS

A RECENT performance\* of M. Ch. Koechlin's short sonata in three movements for two flutes without accompaniment has drawn the attention of public and critics to an instrumental combination new to modern ears. The work is that of a fine musician and would have pleased us on its own merits, but it is also of interest to note how a combination frequently employed a century ago has now altogether fallen into disuse. "A duet for two flutes—can that be beautiful?" asks M. Jean Darnaudat in a long and valuable article devoted to this recital. "There certainly cannot be," he says, "many examples of this type of musical literature if one excepts those little trifles for pupils, like the violin duets of Mazas or of Viotti, which have but slight musical interest."

It is no wonder that the distinguished critic should have fallen into an error, shared by most of his colleagues; nevertheless this music had a great success in its day, and perhaps he is inclined to treat it rather too lightly.

Contrary to his belief, a considerable amount of the music written with or without bass for two flutes is by no means negligible.

The publishers' catalogues during the whole of the eighteenth century point to a very extensive collection, and, although a great part has been lost, enough still remains in the public libraries to supply the flautists' clubs,† which still exist in England and America, with programmes for several years.

A combination of this kind must have met a real need or it would not have enjoyed such popularity for a century and a half. Speaking only of the works written for two flutes unaccompanied (for there exist, besides, a considerable number for two flutes with accompaniment), I would venture to say, that for a certain class of amateurs, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this music must have played the same part as do the pianoforte duets of modern times.

\* Meeting of the "*Société Moderne d'Instruments à Vent*," Salle des Agriculteurs, 7th January, 1922.

† This is quite a recent fashion. At the suggestion of artists or of amateurs, clubs have been founded in London, New York, Boston, etc., etc., composed of amateur flautists, who meet together periodically to play flute duets, trios, and quatuors.

From the end of the eighteenth century till about 1842 the flute was the amateur's pet instrument. In the eighteenth century it was the typical instrument of the aristocracy, not only in Germany, where the illustrious example of Frederick II\* would naturally set the fashion, but in France and in England. A great noble would with difficulty have submitted to the long and tedious study of the clavecin. He would have thought it beneath his dignity to play the fiddle, a plebeian instrument confined to professionals; but, on the other hand, he willingly devoted himself to the flute, which was considered to be quite the right thing.

What was the reason for this preference? We could not say, but we can easily establish the fact, by the number and the quality of the players of that period. Looking through the dedications of works for two flutes, we find the greater number are addressed to pupils of the author, almost all of whom are great nobles or people of wealth—such as Count Egmont, the Duc de Gueldres (Naudot's patron), or M. de la Pouplinière.†

Now we may infer that a great many flute teachers (most of these duets are the works of flautists) did not play the harpsichord. To support the first steps of their pupils they therefore had to improvise an accompaniment on their own flutes, and this convenient arrangement encouraged them to write short pieces. Hence from the ready pen of the flautist of the period came a vast number of duettos, duos and suites for two German flutes "*propres à être joués par les hautbois ou les violons*," of which we will give a brief account later on. But this did not altogether satisfy the taste of the pupils. They were people of fashion who went to theatres and concerts, who heard music and who wished to be able to play it for themselves and to be in touch with the musical world.

The provincial was not altogether ignorant of what went on in Paris; the Parisian had a vague idea of what was passing in foreign countries; and from this cause probably sprang into existence the large collections of *airs*, *concertos*, *short pieces*, *menuets*, etc., with *doubles* and *variations* all arranged for German flutes.

Just as the modern amateur, unable to hear M. Schönberg's latest

\*Readers of Peter Beckford will like to be reminded of his *bon mot*. "Louis the Fifteenth was so passionately fond of hunting that it occupied him entirely. The King of Prussia, who never hunts, gives up a great deal of his time to music, and himself plays on the flute. A German, last war (seven years' war), meeting a Frenchman, asked him very impertinently, 'Si son maître chassoit toujours?' 'Oui, oui,' replied the other—'il ne joue jamais de la flûte!'"—[Ed.]

† A reproduction of a fine portrait by Van Loo, in which M. de la Pouplinière is seen with a flute in his hand forms the frontispiece to a work on the great *Farmier-général*, by the late G. Cucuel.

production, sends for it arranged as a pianoforte duet, so, with the help of his master in Paris, the French dilettante could play the principal airs of Handel's latest opera arranged for two flutes. I have been assured (though, up to now, I have been unable to verify a statement which, I must say, I have some trouble in believing) that the whole score of the *Messiah* existed thus arranged for two flutes unaccompanied. In any case, most of the operatic airs, ballet music, and chansonettes, of the period were so arranged. The three books of Blavet contain much, especially of Rameau and Handel, mixed with short pieces by the composer; arrangements, often, of the pieces he had written for flute with accompaniment.

Thus, the amateur flute player could explore contemporary music, at small cost and without much trouble.

Moreover, the uncommon popularity of this combination is not by any means confined to one century. The taste for it, at its height during the seventeenth century, lasted well on into the nineteenth, and the most popular duets, those of Kuhlau, are in ordinary use among all flute players down to the present day. If, in this article, special attention is paid to the works of the minor composers of the eighteenth century, it is because they are peculiarly successful in a kind of writing which demands neither brilliance nor very wide outlook. Elsewhere, I have often drawn attention to the regrettable fact that during the last century there was a steady decline in the art of writing for the flute. Men like Tulou, Boehm, Drouet and others, introduced a pompous and bombastic style, which killed any desire in the musicians of their generation to write or to hear flute music. But this decline did not prevent the amateurs from increasing by "tens and dozens," and the flautists from offering them their endless series of lucubrations, as we may see any day in the secondhand bookshops.

But we must not think it was only the professional flautists who were tempted by this class of composition; masters of their craft, and not unimportant ones, deigned to add each his stone to the pile. We shall have more to say of these in due course. Of the great fore-runners of the flute players, of those who in all probability began their careers as players of the Recorder, or English flute, and gave it up for the German (and this would date them in the last years of Louis XIV's reign), only one, Michel la Barre, has left a work worthy to survive him. Of *Master Descoteaux*, who was immortalised by La Bruyère as "L'amateur de tulipes," and who delighted the Court of Versailles and the great King himself by his playing of the recorder, not a single work remains. Perhaps he never wrote anything.

The most celebrated member of the Hotteterre dynasty, Hotteterre le Romain, published a treatise on the German flute—famous only



because it was the first work of its kind which appeared in France—and a book of duets for two flutes with accompaniment, which are but indifferent music. We know of nothing else written by him. Of Gaultier de Marseille, whose life of adventure deserves an article to itself, some writings are left to us which it is true are fairly picturesque, but musically uninteresting. When we come to the numerous works of La Barre, however, it is a very different story.

La Barre was born in 1675 and died in 1749. He was influenced by Lully not only in his earliest work (1708), but even down to his latest, and in this respect he is a true seventeenth century composer. He aims at a certain pathetic solemnity, so far as these heights can be attained by his instrument. The publication of his works forms a regular series between the years 1702 to 1725, and it is a curious fact that from 1711 to 1723 he writes, with an eye perhaps to his pupils, only for two flutes, and, with the exception of an unique book (1721) in which an accompaniment is included, all this series is for two flutes unaccompanied. The first two books appeared in the same year, 1711, a third followed in 1713, another in 1714, another in 1721, and two others again in 1722 and 1723. Thus there are altogether seven books of sonatas. None of these are to be neglected and some of the slow movements are quite beautiful. If, as I have strong reason to think, La Barre is really the central figure of the magnificent picture in the National Gallery attributed to Rigaud,\* one would not connect this petulant personage with his music! La Barre is chiefly successful in slow movements, for which he must have had a special affection, for in a suite for two flutes by the organist Dornel (1695-1765) I find a solemn prelude entitled "The favourite of M. de la Barre."

As I have already said, the constellation of great flautists of Louis XIV's time was extinguished with La Barre, but during the Regency, and the reign of Louis XV, the composers and virtuosi realised the brilliant and delicate capabilities of the instrument, and it then arrived at its zenith.

There are two French flautists who are dominant figures in the eighteenth century, Blavet and Naudot, and their fame equals that of their illustrious fellow artist Joachim Quantz from the other side of the Rhine. Frederick's master is a good judge of the matter; he talks of these two with admiration and old Denesle exalts both in his rhapsody "*Syrinx, ou l'origine de la flûte*"; he couples their names with that of the obscure Lucas, of whose life and works we know

\*On the authority of the Catalogue, they have tried to make this personage into Lully himself; Lully, holding a flute in his left hand, and turning over the leaves of a book of La Barre's compositions, La Barre being at Lully's death just eight years old!

nothing at all. Although we may say that we also know nothing about the life of Naudot, at any rate we do know all his compositions; does this mean that his was the career of a professor, while Blavet led chiefly the life of a great virtuoso? We are rather tempted to adopt this hypothesis, since, in spite of Naudot's great reputation, his name does not appear on the register of the Opera orchestra, nor even in the list of those appointed to play occasionally at the *Concerts Spirituels*. While Blavet wrote only one book of sonatas for two flutes without accompaniment, to which he added, it is true, the miscellaneous collections of airs already mentioned, two are to be found in the works of Naudot, besides six books of sonatas and trios for different instruments accompanied, all apt to be played by two flutes. The whole of this is first-class work.

Until the day when I discovered the sonatas of Handel for two flutes with accompaniment which unquestionably bear his own mark (but which might be an arrangement by the composer of works already published), I was inclined to think that Naudot's sonatas were very much the best things that had been written at that period for that particular combination. His music is essentially gay and graceful, though sometimes tinged with an air of melancholy, principally in the (rondos, where he excels. Admirably written for an instrument of which he evidently knows all the capabilities, and showing to the best advantage the abilities, not only of the first, but of the second flute, these sonatas are much more than mere trifles to encourage pupils, they are regular concert pieces, of which the four parts—generally an Adagio serving as an overture, a brilliant Allegro, a slow movement and a rapid finale—give two virtuosos an opportunity of displaying their powers. And this music is not only technically good. Naudot's musical ideas are always on a high level, often exquisite; and if one did not know for a fact, that these great master flautists of the sixteenth century, have been overlooked by, or rather, quite unknown to, their imitators of the following century, one would be unable to account for the complete neglect of him.

This observation does not apply only to his music for two flutes, but to all that he wrote; his compositions, varied and numerous, include no less than twenty volumes, each containing at least six sonatas or miscellaneous pieces, which were published from 1726 to 1749. Blavet, on the other hand, turned to the sonata for flute with accompaniment.

But the examination of our three collections of miscellaneous pieces arranged for two flutes is full of interest, for it faithfully reflects the taste of the time, a sort of anthology of the music that was popular during the Regency, and in Louis XV's reign. The author's share has been much discussed; if he slips in enough of his own music to

keep up his reputation, he is also modest enough to remember that his aim is to bring the scores which were in the fashion within the reach of amateurs. Those of Rameau, and one or two of Handel, are their most lasting ornament. With them is a very fair number of chansonnettes and little popular airs, all of a kind to suit the cultivated taste.

Boismortier is accountable in the Bibliothèque Nationale for six books of sonatas for two flutes and bass, not to mention others for two flutes and figured bass, a book of trios for three flutes and bass, and a book of concertos for five flutes. This last has one distinguishing feature, the fifth flute can be replaced by the *continuo*, and it is written in such a way that it could not be played upon the ordinary flute, but would require a flute in G. This takes us back to the concerto for flutes of different keys of which the "*Prélude du Triomphe de l'Amour*," by Lully, is the most characteristic example. That is, however, quite exceptional; for the characteristic feature of these ensembles of flutes (duos, trios, and quatuors) is, that they are written for instruments of the same key and the same compass. Like most of his work, these sonatas of Boismortier are only of slight interest, as can also be said of many such pieces of that period.

We find a quantity in the stores of the National Library alone—duets from the pen of Athys, Birault, Braun, Guillemain, Guillemant, Handouville, Leclercq, Lot (an ancestor of the first maker of the Boehm flute, and a flute maker himself), de Lusse, Montclair, the Philidor, Roget, Taillart, and Telemann. And this represents only a small amount of all that was written during the eighteenth century.

If we add that all the duos for two violins were, for selling purposes, published by the authors, as suitable for the German flute, we arrive at an enormous quantity of music for two flutes. No doubt most of these pieces repose for good and all on the shelves of the libraries, and it would be the greatest pity if anyone took the trouble to unearth them.

The author usually adopts the reprehensible practice of doubling the part of the first flute in thirds and sixths. It is only too easy to fall into these courses, and the composers, either from laziness or ignorance, never fail to do so. It is just this that the great musicians, like Handel, or the masters of style, such as Naudot and Blavet, knew how to avoid. To these two names we ought to add another, that of a flautist even more obscure than the mysterious Naudot—the charming Pierre Bucquet, whose name was given us, some few years ago, now, by Charles Bouvet.\*

\*It is in fact this distinguished violinist and musicologist who has had the honour of bringing the music for two flutes unaccompanied once more into esteem. Two suites by Pierre Bucquet, brought to light by the industry of M. Bouvet, were published by him in 1910.

Pierre Bucquet's\* name is pure French, but, as far as we know, he either travelled, or lived altogether, in Spain. Was he familiar with the works of the great François Couperin, or did he draw on his own imagination for the idea of programme music? For these little pieces, very engaging for the most part, and perfectly written, bear amusing sub-titles with musical comments which are not without skill—and even if it should happen that the comments have little or nothing to do with the title, the music is still very charming. It is rather a curious thing, that the pieces of this period for two flutes without accompaniment, which most deserve revival,† are duets by two musicians who are quite forgotten—Naudot and Pierre Bucquet. Nevertheless they were to be outstripped, some time later, by that master in this style, Kuhlau.

But before coming to him, I must not omit the name of the celebrated Devienne, who is the most representative of all the flautists of the transition period (end of 18th century). During his short career—born at Joinville Haute Marne in 1759, he died, mad, at Charenton in 1809—this charming musician has immortalised himself in three ways: by his little opera, *Les Visitandines*, which had a considerable success during the Terror, and which, not long ago, was still in the repertory; by a *Méthode de Flûte*, still in use; last, and above all, in my opinion, for having served as a model to David—who has given us an admirable portrait of him, now in the Brussels Museum.

Kuhlau was nicknamed by his contemporaries "the Beethoven of the Flute." "We are not told," my distinguished friend, Professor D. F. Tovey, amusingly remarks, in the Analytical Notes of his Edinburgh Concerts,‡ "that Beethoven ever deserved to be called the Kuhlau of the Symphony." Who would have thought that one of the earliest works of Beethoven would actually be one of those duets for two flutes unaccompanied in which Kuhlau was to excel?

One fact is unquestionable, this little unpretending duetto is really the work of Beethoven; the manuscript, which formed part of the collection of Dr. Prieger, of Bonn, bears this inscription: "*Pour l'ami Degenhart, 1792, 23 Août, minuit.*"

\*The exact title of his only known work is: *Pièces à 2 Flûtes traversières sans basse | divisées en 4 suites | dédiées à Monsieur le Comte | Rôdolphe de Rottembourg | capitaine de cavalerie | composées par Pierre Bucquet | gravées par Pierre Caillaux | se vend chez l'Auteur suivant la Cour | à Seville 1734.*

† I except the sonatas of Handel and the duos of Kuhlau.

‡ Articles of the most distinguished criticism, which, both for their subject and their literary form, well deserve to be collected in a book.



Like most of the works of Beethoven's extreme youth, it is a little piece without much light and shade, inspired directly by Mozart or Haydn, far less skilful, however, than the first works of Mozart. At the same time, one cannot deny it the qualities of grace and freshness, but nothing of it foreshadows the Beethoven of the symphonies and quartets. It is evident that this small work was written to order, or for some amateur friend.

I thought I had established the fact of its existence, when doubt was thrown upon the authenticity of the sonata for flute and piano, recovered, and published some years ago by M. Aug. van Leeuwen.

This sonata, which is not in Beethoven's handwriting, but which is believed to have been written by him before he left Bonn, has had its authenticity strongly contested, but in my opinion it bears, even in its clumsinesses, the characteristic marks of his genius. We may venture to think, that having some amateur flautist to satisfy, he wrote the sonata and the little duo, one after the other—just as Mozart had done before him; almost all of the latter's works for the flute having been written in the same year, 1778, to please a worthy French amateur, the Duc de Guines.

The name of Kuhlau is known chiefly to the public by the sonatas for piano, which form the basis of so many pianoforte educations. It is not here, however, that the talent of the Danish musician has shown itself most happily, but rather in his flute music—especially that for two flutes.

In his fairly large output, which would have been much larger yet, if a fire had not, towards the end of his life, destroyed a great part of his manuscripts, the music for two, three, and even four flutes predominates.

We know, of his, six books of three duos, one book of three trios, one quartet. Most of them, though within reach of amateurs, are fairly difficult, and require a good average technique.

The duets generally comprise three fairly developed movements—most of them after the same plan—an opening Allegro, a slow movement, and a final rondo; but the composer has not by any means tied himself to one form. He has managed to vary his effects, and always with success; the duet of Op. 81, for example, contains an amusing scherzo, in canon. The slow movements of some duos are airs and variations, and one can't too much admire the ingenuity, and the varied combinations of the one in B minor, the theme of which is composed of only three notes.

Kuhlau has here found some delightful effects, and it seems impos-

sible that anyone can employ to greater advantage two instruments of the same timbre and of a compass of less than three octaves. Certainly, in writing this long series of duettos, Kuhlau thought more about his pupils than about the artists, and he could have had no idea of their being performed in public. Therefore, he did not spare the difficulties of reading, of rhythm, and even of technique. This schoolmaster's manner is, however, hardly noticeable—the whole remains perfectly balanced and of incontestible musical interest. I do not know, however, that this music has ever appeared on a concert programme. All the flautists, composers of the first half of the nineteenth century, followed this tradition—Tulou, Berbiguier, Camus, Kummer, and, later Demerssemann and Walckiers wrote numerous duets for the benefit of their pupils, but of a sensibly inferior quality. Perhaps Walckiers (1793-1866), a professor of the flute, who lived in Paris towards the end of his career, succeeded best in a style of which Kuhlau is the acknowledged master.

At the beginning of this article, I spoke of a sonata for two flutes by M. Charles Koechlin. His is neither dull music nor pupil's exercises. We find only the happy inspirations of a practised and refined musician.

I might have thought that this short sonata was a unique example in modern times of this class of music, but I have just seen another sonata, in four parts, also for two flutes, by M. Robert Casadesus. The date of this manuscript (1920) proves that the young virtuoso-composer has written his book quite spontaneously, without having known that M. Koechlin's existed. This is an indication of the ever-increasing interest, which is felt by composers of to-day, in the numerous combinations of wind instruments. More and more is written for small groups—even for instruments alone—and this is not accomplished without a regular little revolution in the technique of composition. The various sonatas of M. Poulenc for two clarinets, for clarinets and bassoon, for horn, trumpets, and trombone; the pieces, by M. Stravinsky, for clarinet solo, the pieces for flute solo by MM. Siöhan, P. Ferroud, Cyril Scott, Whittaker, etc., etc., link us with a succession of compositions who for more than a century were totally neglected. Here is a fertile field to explore for cultivation, and there is no doubt that it has in store for us more than one happy surprise.

L. FLEURY.

*Trans. by P. WYATT EDGEHILL.*

## EXOTIC MUSIC

I HAVE just (10.2.25) been hearing an Armenian, Mr. Haig Gudénian, play music of the half a dozen nationalities which border the Eastern Mediterranean. He learned the violin with Sevcik and composition with Novak. He believes that music is a power, and can do good. His tunes are not "collected," they were not heard at a particular time and place; they are his own generalisation of much that he has heard in Turkey, Persia, Egypt and elsewhere, in the sense that he has kept what he believes the native musicians intended and omitted what he takes to be their imperfections. He thinks they intended to expand their thoughts and feelings in that language which everyone understands, and that behind his tones are alike Omar Khaiyyam's philosophy and the wayside satire of a candy-seller, and, ultimately, God and the love of one's neighbour. Those are the things, no doubt, which the Oriental ponders, and why should it not come out in his music—the politeness of the Turk, the reticent smile of the Arab, the Sphinx that the Egyptian raised, and not, what we chiefly know, the throb of machinery and the glare of advertisement? He gazes on eternity while we busy ourselves with time; we call him dreamy, he calls us fussy; he says we jabber, we say he is obscure.

This leads me to try to find out, by writing about it, what is the essence of exotic music. Perhaps I shall have few readers, for we Europeans think small beer of unharmonised music. We picture music as beginning with Henry VII or VIII; we think gratefully of Dr. Fellows for having laid its foundations so truly, we possess with pride (and we hope with profit) the three splendid volumes of the Carnegie Trust, and we applaud the recent investigation of the Worcester fragments as a glorious, if a forlorn, hope. Scholars also explore Greek music and try to persuade themselves that the Greeks had harmony and, so, a claim to recognition. But when we get back to the sheer, unadorned, single line of melody—as it must be remembered we do over more than half the globe—we feel that kind of pity which Robert (was it?) felt in Mrs. Markham's English History, when she came to the Roman method of counting with the abacus and their clumsy letters that preceded the Saracenic numbers. I have lost or lent—nearly the same thing—my Mrs. Markham, but I remember he poured nine-year-old scorn on their backwardness, and wondered how they ever managed to conquer the world.

But pity is akin to love, and the love of these wailing, inconsequent, uncanny, unaccountable melodies may as well begin there as anywhere else. It certainly does not begin with the study of obscure scales and rhythms (though I once thought it did, and talked as vainly about them as any Pelagian). It does not, for the simple reason that these are in principle the same everywhere, and differ only in the degree of accuracy and intricacy they reach. Pitch and duration are just powers of the mind—like stress and curve and force elsewhere—which man explores perpetually and theorises upon occasionally. His theories travel a well-known path, of which the stepping-stones are (1) divine origin, (2) a secret guild, (3) mysticism and its satellite sensuality, (4) popularisation and chaos, (5) foreign influence and eventual compromise. In the process they run up blind alleys and make a network of rules, and for their pains the esoterics generally form a despised caste; but music moves on meanwhile in the bazaar unhampered by the rules and leaves them behind.

(1) Music, the patterning of pitch and duration, is a gift, and this gift is denied only to those people, or those peoples, which have ears but hear not. We do not know where the gift comes from—we think from our parents, but facts do not bear this out as well as we could wish; so we call it divine, not so much because it is wonderful, though it is that, as because it is not self-seeking, not appetitive. When we have a pantheon we think we know which god inspired it; when we philosophise, or psychically-analyse and call the gods emotions, we think we know which emotion it expresses.

(2) The god must have a priesthood, and a close guild arises; there are the faithful and the unbelievers, the privileged and the serfs, the cleric and the layman, the professional and the amateur. Music is cultivated not as the act of an individual worshipper but as a boon to be conferred on a congregation. It becomes refined and creates a standard and a reputation. Prestige comes to its creators, and they raise their price. The god has, for the coarser minds, become mammon. Nature has its revenge—

Plus de chant; il perdit la voix  
Du moment qu'il gagna ce qui cause nos peines.

Individual instances of this arise in every generation; for nations we may take the England of the eighteenth century and the Germany of the nineteenth.

(8) As knowledge becomes differentiated and thought broader and deeper, almost the equivalent of act, music rises here and sinks there



to a metaphor. It was the handmaid of religion; it becomes the maid of all work. It had been the tone of voice in which the lover talked to his love, the soldier to his sword, the mother to her baby, the mourner over the dead, and apart from these it had no existence. But it has now become so articulate that, without the use of any words Blondel can comfort Richard Lion Heart in prison, and the returning laird of Duntroon can be warned by his piper that Colketto is in possession of his castle, just as the Ashanti and Indian drummers send news faster than the telegraph. Music has discarded the swaddling clothes of poetry and can walk by itself.\* In its new freedom it learns to hint at, if not to dissert upon, any province of human thought; an Indian finds Sufism in his tones, and a Persian the philosophy of Omar in his, as much as any Strauss-worshipper finds Nietzsche in a tone-poem. "Programme music" cannot believe that music is divorced from life; neither is it. But it tries to re-establish the connection, which words had before supplied, in supplementing audible images by visual and eventually substituting the visual structure for the audible. At that point it fails, because musical emotion and thought are never a question of "what" but of "how much" we feel and "how deeply" we think things that self or circumstance have already suggested to us, and that depends not on the figures music makes use of but on the use it makes of them. Yet "programme" expresses a truth—that music is a matter of the heart as well as of the head.

(4) Then, the aristocracy of music is ignored and the commons have their day. The old aspirations and the old preciousities are alike forgotten, the fine shades are blurred, styles are confused, taste is uncertain, critics are born. Particular knowledge is replaced by broadcast curiosity. Composers separate themselves from performers, as performers had separated themselves from the general body of worshippers; they are trained by the thousand and crowd the earth, but they are given no time to grow; before they have made their experiments and false starts, another has taken their thought and developed it into something else. The minstrel in the rajah's court preaching to the pundits is now the wayside beggar with a stunt; but the status of this beggar has risen; he is no longer in rags nor an outcast; he is a fellow-worker, if he will work.

(5) Last comes the cosmopolitan stage. The self-created republic of music can get no further and must be fertilised from beyond its borders. Thus Japanese music drew its strength from China, the Mahomedans imposed a brilliance and conciseness upon the

\* Cf. Sir Henry Hadow's lecture to the Musical Association, January, 1924.

graceful, wayward melodies of the Hindus, and Mozarabia simplified its instruments and its system under the influence of the Gregorian tones it heard in Spain. Thus, too, Handel added to German thoroughness Italian grace and English breadth of view, and thus England despaired of the republic and called in Mendelssohn and Brahms as dictators. There is in this nothing derogatory to the invaded nation. We cannot speak without someone to speak to, nor write without an argument, nor act except at the call of circumstance. Every nation has music in it, but something must happen to bring it out. If music is to show us "how much" we feel, we must first have something to feel—some poverty to bear, some faith to fight for, some tyranny to rebuke, some wrong to right; and to a nation this something must come from outside. In Palestrina's time it came from the apostasies of the middle ages, in Byrd's and Luther's from the tyranny of the Inquisition and the shame of the Indulgences, in Mozart's and Beethoven's from the lasting poverty and feeble parochialism induced by the Thirty Years' War.

Talking to those who live and make music outside the European convention and listening to their melodies one comes to think less of schools and vogues and history and more of the human needs which music satisfies. When the musician cuts down a branch of bamboo to make a flute or stretches a skin over a waterpot for a drum, he certainly wants music for its own sake. He is full of stories, indeed, of the great players and singers of the past, though he seldom ventures on a date; and we may guess, though we cannot know, that Omar the tentmaker and Kalidasa the playwright marked epochs in music as well as in poetry. But taken as a whole music has no history that matters to him, and so his theories pile up one after another like Pelion on Ossa and then weather down to a shapeless mass and are forgotten. "Time antiquates antiquities, and hath an art to make a dust of all things."

Everyone knows that Oriental music, and research teaches us that unharmonised music in general, employs microtones. These are of four kinds. European music (which stops at the semitone) is based on the lower harmonics only, and by combining their intervals in special, recognised ways we have produced our scale. But it would have been possible to combine them in other ways<sup>(1)</sup> (as the Hindus did), or to take in, if we could hear them (which most of us cannot), the upper harmonics<sup>(2)</sup> (as Scriabin perhaps intended, though he did

(1) It is convenient to estimate the microtones as fractions of the pianoforte (or equally tempered) semitone. Thus the comma, for instance is  $\frac{1}{22}$  of the E.T. semitone.

(2) *E.g.*, the septimal comma,  $\frac{1}{27}$ .

not clearly say). Either of these methods would give determinate microtones. There is a third way—mechanical measurement. Thus D and F, let us say, being fixed by frets on a string, it is possible to divide into equal halves the string distance between the frets, as the Arabs did, and produce a note a little nearer to E flat than to E natural<sup>(1)</sup>; or, again, to take the vibration numbers of D and F and put eight other pitches between them,<sup>(2)</sup> as Busoni proposed to do (tuning them by means of an American invention), though he did not live to show how it could be done, or, when done, used; or, again, to contract the interval D-F a little within its legitimate size, as Equal Temperament does, and then put two other pitches inside it.<sup>(3)</sup> Of these three methods only the way of the Arabs, of the Hindus, and of Equal Temperament have as yet resulted in a workable system.

The fourth method is guesswork. In passing from E to F the voice or string dwells for a moment at a pitch approximately half-way.<sup>(4)</sup> Since this pitch cannot be determined, it is impossible for one player exactly to repeat it, or for two players to coincide there, in such a way, at least, as to be of use in harmony. Hence in the recent quartets, by Haba and others, in which such attempts have been made, the "quartertunes" have been confined to the unessential, the passing, notes, where a little discrepancy would not necessarily amount to false intonation: those who have heard them have not, however, written as if they considered them a great invention, and, in fact, they are said to sound like the ordinary modern quartet with a good deal of *portamento*.

But this indeterminate microtone is just the one that is extensively used in melody. Its purpose is to provide perspective for the tune, to bring its notes, as it were, out of the flat into the round. That was what those Highland quirks also were aiming at that Major Grant was telling us about in the January number of this magazine, although they were, of course, strictly diatonic. So intimate a part of the music are the grace notes that when I asked a South Indian piper for his scale, although he understood what I wanted, he was quite unable to play it without grace notes until I took his fingers one by one and put them down on the holes. But perspective is just what harmony supplies to one of our melodies. It takes a note and, by giving it a certain quality, makes us feel which way it is facing,

(1) The interval from E flat is  $\cdot 29$ .

(2) Each interval is  $\cdot 33$ .

(3) The E.T. semitone is  $\cdot 29$  sharper than the chromatic and  $\cdot 12$  flatter than the diatonic.

(4) Ranging from  $\cdot 33$  to  $\cdot 50$ .

so to say, and prepares us for what is coming next. So that these microtonal grace notes are the real counterpart of our harmony.

Yet Mr. Gudénian omits all these microtones, and rations himself closely in grace notes. He says that music is a thing of the spirit and that the microtones bring in the body, which he wishes left alone. This makes him suspect to the purist, for no one ever heard of Oriental music without microtones. On the other hand he introduces embryo harmony, a thing that the native players know nothing of. He does, in fact, what Dr. Coomaraswamy advised years ago for Indian music, when I proved to him (to my own satisfaction) that he was wrong. Mr. Gudénian has now shown me that he was right: this elementary harmony is a very satisfactory substitute for the quartertones. Moreover our minds have been much broadened in the last twenty years, and we can hear the consecutive semitones and fourths and fifths, which he employs, without blenching. The total result is that we find our way about the tune without difficulty, although it is not in the least like anything we ever heard, except in the East.

And now, apart from the "programme," which is after all a metaphor, a way of putting into words our experience (which remains, however, a purely musical experience), and apart from the microtones (which we have seen not to be of the essence of the matter), what is the fascination of exotic music? That there is a fascination, and a purely musical one, I do not doubt. After setting aside novelty and the sense of adventure, the strange scene, dress, gesture, posture, language and customs, we still enjoy, with the absence of harmony, two things. The freedom, which all of our singers claim but can indulge only within strict limits, of sharpening or flattening expressively and on occasion is untrammelled, for without harmony it causes no dissonance. Also, the rigidity which harmony has imposed upon rhythm, which the Elizabethans had not yet felt but which Beethoven riveted with bands of iron, is entirely absent; the note has no commitments, no future obligations to meet, no plan to build, and it is entirely free to be its own sweet self; even words hardly hamper it, for they admit of unlimited repetition and interpolation. The native voice, if we can abstract its surprising and sometimes repellent quality, is the best medium; but the instrument, with whatever imperfections, comes near the voice, since the finger is actually on the string and no mechanism intervenes. Mr. Gudénian does for these Levant melodies what Ratan Devi did for Hindu melodies. The claim, which both have made good, is to present not the music actually made by the native singer or player, but the music that they aspire to make.



Perhaps we shall best get at the feeling of exotic music with the help of two illustrations. Rabindranath Tagore wrote a poem :—

I know, I know thee, O thou Bideshini. Thou dwellest on the other shore of the ocean, O thou Bideshini. I have seen thee in the autumn, I have felt thee in the spring night; I have found thee in the midst of my heart, O thou Bideshini. Leaning my ear to the sky I have heard thy music, and I have offered to thee my life, O thou Bideshini. I have roamed all through the world and have come at last into the strange country; here I am, a guest at thy door, O thou Bideshini.

(*Bideshini* means "stranger lady," and it is addressed to Intellectual Beauty. The sky, *ākasha*, the vault of heaven, is the source of all sound and speech.) Mr. Tagore told me he was thinking of Shelley :—

The awful shadow of some unseen Power,  
Floats, though unseen, among us; visiting  
This various world with as inconstant wing  
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower.

and later,

The day becomes more solemn and serene  
When noon is past; there is a harmony  
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky  
Which through the summer is not heard nor seen,  
As if it could not be, as if it had not been.

When *Gitanjali* first reached this country, a poet greeted it with this sentence among others :—

A whole people, a whole civilisation, immeasurably strange to us, seems to have been taken up into this imagination; and yet we are not moved because of its strangeness, but because we have met our own image, as though we had walked in Rossetti's willow wood, or heard, perhaps for the first time in literature, our voice as in a dream.

That same poet told me once when we were talking of the possibility or otherwise of presenting Tagore's metres so as to match his melodies, that he thought the Latin medieval hymn, which I had suggested as a vehicle, might be suitable. For Latin is as concise as Bengali, medieval metres are accentual not quantitative, and there is the whole of the *Aeneid* to show that disyllabic endings are not only common but preponderant in Latin, as they are uncommon and wearisome in English; moreover, Indian songs in general and Tagore's in particular "let Religion in," and the hymn is therefore in keeping. Also, we do sing Latin, and even if the sharp edges of our know-

ledge have been worn down with the years, we recognise the drift from the general sound and a word here or there. This version gives both the metre and the rhyme-scheme of the Bengali; the melody is given in *The Music of Hindostan*, p. 95.

Ami chini go chini tomari,  
O go Bideshini;  
Tumi thako sindhu pare  
O go Bideshini.

Tomaye dekhechhi sharada prate,  
Tomay dekhechhi madhavi rate,  
Tomay dekhechhi hridi majare,  
O go Bideshini.

Ami akashe patiya kan,  
Sunecchi sunecchi tomari gan;  
Ami tomare sampecchi pran,  
O go Bideshini.

Bhubana brahmiya ashe,  
Ami esechi nutana deshe,  
Ami atithi tomare dware,  
O go Bideshini.

Mihi notam te, mihi notam,  
Regina devia,  
Tenet Oceanus remotam,  
Regina devia.

Te video, dea, flore madenti,  
Audio te sub sole cadenti,  
Tete sentio corde silenti,  
Regina devia.

Procul audiit altisonam  
Vocem auris intenta tuam;  
Accipe cor animamque meam,  
Regina devia.

Per terram vestigia totam  
Domum petiere remotam,  
Ecce januam pepuli notam,  
Regina devia.

Mr. Tagore has told us how this song came to be written :—

I heard when I was very young the song "Who dressed you like a foreigner?" and I once tried to compose a song myself under the spell of that line. As I hummed the tune I wrote the first line, "I know thee, thou stranger," and if there were no tune to it, I don't know what would be left of the song. But under the spell of the tune my heart began to say, "There is a stranger going to and fro in this world of ours; her house is on the further shore of an ocean of mystery." One day, long afterwards, someone went along the road singing, "How does that unknown bird go to and away from the cage? Could I but catch it, I would put the chain of my mind about its feet!" I saw that that *Ba'ul* song (folksong) said the very same thing. Sometimes the unknown bird comes to the closed cage and speaks a word of the limitless Unknown; and the mind would keep it for ever, but cannot. What but the tune of the song could report the coming and going of this unknown bird? Because of this I always feel hesitation in publishing a book of songs, for in such a book the main thing is left out.

The other illustration I would take is a little story from *The Conference of Birds*, by R. P. Masani, just published by the Oxford Press; it is the initiation of Hazrat Ali. Muhammad delivered from time to time to the "Brethren of Sincerity" the secrets of religion, and among them to Hazrat Ali, enjoining secrecy. For forty days his lips were sealed; but the secret became such a burden that he grew sick at heart, and even breathing became difficult. He fled to the desert and chanced upon a well. Stooping down he confided the mysteries one by one to the keeping of the earth. In his excitement his mouth filled with froth and foam, which also passed into the well. In a few days a seed was found to have sprouted there, and an enlightened

shepherd cut down the plant, drilled holes in the stem, and began to play airs as he pastured his sheep. Not only the sheep and camels, but the wild nomads flocked to hear his music and wept for joy at the sound. The matter was brought to the Prophet and the player was taken before him. There, too, he moved all the holy disciples to tears, and they were, so to say, wafted away from the plane of self-consciousness. But the Messenger of God at once found out the key to this miraculous chanting, and declared that it was inspired by those very mysteries that he had confided to Ali's charge.

The words exotic, esoteric, eccentric, have something in common, and it is easy for those who have pursued such studies to see that they are regarded by their friends as cranks, and to divine the unexpressed thought that, having failed to make anything of their own music, because it is too difficult, they have fallen back on one which is too easy to be worth troubling about. Yet the study of exotic music shows us some things we are apt to forget. It shows us how music is the outcome of what is abiding in the character of a people, and in a way in which we cannot see it in Europe where we are primarily members of a common civilisation. It takes our minds away from fashions and fads and fixes them upon essentials—the awe and modesty that accompany real thought and feeling, the glow and ecstasy of creative contemplation, the fine edge of skill in action, the potential greatness of little things, the unselfishness of the artist and the unmercenaryness of art. It reminds us, too, that music began in song and that it is never very happy when it gets far away from that; that string quartet and orchestra have missed something when they forget to sing; that the organ is no mere relic of the age of faith, but a living instrument, because it sings. We may learn something also from exotic songs, which are dilatory without being sentimental and passionate without vehemence, and from native singers who are musicians first and voice-producers afterwards.

A. H. FOX STRANGWAYS.

## REPRESENTATIVE BOOKS ABOUT MOZART

It was, I believe, Hans von Bülow who exclaimed, after a performance of one of Mozart's works: "That young man should have a bright future before him." Possibly the remark was thought a little stupid at the time, but it is easy to appreciate its significance to-day when a marked revival of interest in Mozart's music is everywhere apparent. The revival is due to many causes, mostly obvious enough, and may perhaps be traced back to the end of the last century, when, as Mr. Herman Klein has reminded us, Richard Strauss's Mozart Festivals at Munich became popular as a sort of digestive to follow the banquets of Bayreuth. But it must not be forgotten that the exigencies of war-time and post-war finance were partly responsible for bringing Mozart into his present-day prominence. The colossal post-Wagnerian orchestra, of which men's ears were already growing a little tired, became for the time an economic impossibility, and conductors and others turned their attention to music that did not call for such an expensive equipment. Mozart was naturally one of the first composers to profit by the change. But if he is to hold his position, now that conditions are becoming more normal, it will be because we have grown to love his music too much ever to let it go. At present we tend to take our Mozart a little too lightly. Heaven forbid that we should bury him beneath a mass of learned treatises. But the idea is still prevalent that his music is just a chain of charming and unpretentious melodies, excellent by way of relaxation, but not to be confused with sterner stuff. This is, however, a view that would not survive a careful study of the works, and it was the hope of facilitating such a study that led me to compile the brief book-list\* that follows. I am sorry that so few of the books are English, but when it is remembered that until comparatively recently the best history of the music of our own country was the work of a German scholar,† the lack of good books in English about a foreign composer will seem less surprising. For convenience of reference I have set out the books one by one and commented on them in turn.

\* The list does not contain monographs that have now been fully absorbed by later works.

† W. Nagel: *Geschichte der Musik in England*. (Strassburg, 1894-7.)



A.—DOCUMENTS.

- 1.—*Die Briefe W. A. Mozarts und seiner Familie. Erste kritische Gesamtausgabe, von Ludwig Schiedermair.* 5 vol. G. Müller: Munich, 1914.

This edition of the letters of Mozart and his family definitely supersedes the earlier collection—confined to Mozart's letters only—by Ludwig Nohl, in the English version of which, by Lady Wallace, the letters are best known in this country. Mozart's own letters occupy vols. 1 and 2; select letters of his father, with a few by his mother, sister, and wife, vols. 3 and 4. Vol. 5 provides a handsome but somewhat miscellaneous collection of portraits, facsimiles and other illustrations. The text of the letters is faithfully reproduced and is at times extremely difficult for a foreigner to interpret. Unfortunately Herr Schiedermair's notes are not very numerous.

- 2.—*Leopold Mozart: Reise-Aufzeichnungen, 1768-1771. 27 faksimilierte handschriftliche Blätter. . . . Herausgegeben und erläutert von Dr. Arthur Schurig. Mit . . . einer Mozart-Ikonographie.* pp. 109. O. Laube: Dresden, 1920.

A reproduction and transcription of the diary kept by Leopold Mozart during his travels with his children. It gives details of their lodgings and the names of the notable people whom they met or hoped to make use of, and other brief notices, which together furnish a valuable mass of fresh biographical material. The six pages devoted to Mozart's London visit are of particular interest to English readers, and supplement the information given in C. F. Pohl's "*Mozart and Haydn in London*" in many particulars. Herr Schurig has added some delightful entries from Marianne's own diary, and, somewhat unexpectedly, a valuable list of Mozart portraits.\*

B.—BIBLIOGRAPHICAL WORKS.

- 1.—Curzon (Henri de) *Essai de bibliographie mozartine. Revue critique des ouvrages relatifs à W. A. Mozart et à ses œuvres.* pp. 39. Librairie Fischbacher: Paris, 1906.

Records 458 books and articles relating to Mozart. A very useful piece of work, although bristling with misprints and disfigured by a few more serious inaccuracies.

- 2.—Wurzbach (Constantin von) *Mozart-Buch.* pp. 295. Verlag der Wallershauserschen Buchhandlung: Vienna, 1869.

A sort of Mozart-encyclopædia, invaluable even now for purposes of ready reference.

\*Now published in a revised form in the 2nd. ed. of the author's *Mozart biography*.

3.—Köchel (Ludwig von) *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Tonwerke Wolfgang Amade Mozarts. Zweite Auflage, bearbeitet und ergänzt von Paul Graf von Waldersee.* pp. xlviii. 676. Breitkopf & Härtel: Leipzig, 1905.

Köchel's thematic catalogue of Mozart's works, first published in 1862, is too well-known to need detailed comment. It provides the only ready means of identifying Mozart's compositions, the mere number of which renders it necessary to distinguish them by some generally accepted symbol. Later criticism has shown that Köchel is often at fault in his dating of particular works, but for reasons of convenience his numbering is not likely to be superseded. A new edition, however, based upon a really thorough-going revision, would be very welcome.

#### C.—MOZART PERIODICALS.

1.—*Mitteilungen für die Mozart-Gemeinde in Berlin.* Berlin, 1895, etc.

I mention this periodical here because in the past, in addition to a good deal of rubbish, it has published some important articles, and it may do so again. At the present moment, however, it appears to be in a very critical condition, and it may expire at any moment.

2.—*Mozarteums-Mitteilungen. Herausgegeben vom Zentralausschluss der Mozartgemeinde in Salzburg.* 10 nos., Nov. 1918-May 1921.

This periodical, issued by the Mozarteum at Salzburg, an institution which combines the functions of a Mozart library with those of a general conservatoire of music, was promising to be a valuable repository for the results of Mozart research when it came to an unexpected end, partly through lack of support, but chiefly owing to the high cost of book production in Austria at the time.

3.—*Mozart-Jahrbuch. Herausgegeben von Hermann Abert.* Drei Masken Verlag: Munich, 1923, etc.

This Mozart Year-Book should be more than an adequate substitute for the unfortunate "*Mozarteums Mitteilungen.*" The first number contains, amongst other matter, an admirable essay by the editor on the present position of Mozartian scholarship and on the tasks that still confront it, the score of 6 minuets previously unknown, and of a complete symphony of Mozart's youth (K. Anh., 221), of which the opening themes only were hitherto recorded. A bibliography of the literature on Mozart published during the previous year is also a valuable feature.

D.—GENERAL BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM.

- 1.—Nissen (Georg Nikolaus von) *Biographie W. A. Mozarts . . . Nach dessen [Nissen's] Tode herausgegeben von Constanze, Witwe von Nissen, früher Witwe Mozart.*—*Anhang zu Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Biographie.* 2 pt. Breitkopf & Härtel: Leipzig, 1828.

Nissen was the Danish diplomat who married Mozart's widow in 1809. For his biography of Mozart he had access to a vast amount of original material; and, although he was always ready to alter or excise passages in deference to Constanze's wishes, succeeded in incorporating a good deal of it in his book. Unfortunately the work is so abominably arranged that it is almost impossible to find anything in it. For this very reason one can never feel sure that its contents have ever been completely assimilated, and it must find a mention even in the briefest Mozart bibliography. A French adaptation by A. Sowinski (Paris, 1869) is occasionally helpful as it is provided with an index.

- 2.—Oulibicheff (Alexandre) *Nouvelle biographie de Mozart, suivie d'un aperçu sur l'histoire générale de la musique et de l'analyse des principales œuvres de Mozart.* 3 vol. A. Semen: Moscow, 1848.

The biographical portion of Oulibicheff's work is mainly a *résumé* of Nissen. What gives the book its permanent value are the critical analyses which are to be found in the second and third volumes. In these the author displays a delicacy of perception and a gift for the literary description of musical processes that many profounder scholars have been unable to acquire. The French original of this book is extremely scarce, but it may be read in the German translation by A. Shraishuon (Stuttgart, 1847; 2nd ed. revised by L. Ganthner 1859, reissued in 1864). There is also a German translation of the chapters relating to the operas, by C. Kossmaly (Leipzig, 1846).

- 3.—Holmes (Edward) *The Life of Mozart, including his correspondence.* pp. 264. Chapman & Hall: London, 1845.—2nd ed., edited by E. Prout (Novello, 1878); reissued in Dent's Everyman's Library, with an introduction by Ernest Newman, 1912.

One of the most readable of all the biographies. Although for the most part an exceedingly skilful summary of the materials collected by Nissen, it contains a good deal of fresh matter, chiefly derived from the Abbé Stadler and Anton André, whose acquaintance Holmes had made while travelling on the continent in 1827. Jahn himself considered it the best book written on Mozart before he wrote his own.

4.—Jahn (Otto) *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*. 4 vol. Breitkopf & Härtel: Leipzig, 1856-59.—2nd ed. in 2 vol., 1867; 3rd ed., 1889-91, 4th, 1905-7 (both revised by H. Deiters). The 2nd ed. was translated into English by Miss Pauline D. Townsend (3 vol., Novello, 1882, reissued in 1891, now out of print).

Of the above editions, the second, the last revised by Jahn himself, is the one usually cited in references. The first must, however, often be consulted for details afterwards pruned away. The third and fourth editions contain no new material of any great importance.\* Miss Townsend's translation is reliable, but often ludicrously timid in its versions of Mozart's vigorous phraseology. It should be noted that this English version omits the greater number of the appendices and the whole of the valuable musical supplement which Jahn provided.

Jahn's work has long been recognised as a classic of its kind. It was the first musical biography to be written in accordance with the canons of the modern historical method: it went back to the original sources and relied upon a careful examination of the music itself. It is moreover a fine piece of writing. Yet it has its faults. Jahn was a Romantic and an anti-Wagnerian, and the picture that he drew was coloured by his prepossessions and antipathies, which affected his estimate both of Mozart's personal character and of his music. Moreover, when it came to the latter, his historical background was often far too sketchy. He was unjust to Mozart's predecessors and contemporaries and gave scarcely a hint of many of the forces that went to mould his style. Unfortunately the very extent and general excellence of his book produced the impression that he had exhausted his subject and that nothing more remained to be done—with the result that nothing more *was* done, save that Jahn's dish was continually served up in more easily digestible forms.

5.—Wyzewa (Théodor de) and Saint-Foix (Georges de) *W.-A. Mozart. Sa vie musicale et son œuvre de l'enfance à la pleine maturité, 1756-1777. Essai de biographie critique, suivie d'un nouveau catalogue chronologique de l'œuvre complète du maître*. 2 vol. Perrin et Cie.: Paris, 1912.

If the figure may be permitted, we might describe Jahn's book as the Old Testament of the pious Mozartian and the work of the two French scholars as the New. The words "vie musicale" in the title are important. Believing that the life of an artist of genius—as

\*Hermann Abert's book on Mozart (see below) is described on the title-page as a fifth edition of Jahn's biography, but is best regarded as a new work.



distinct from mere talent—can never be reconstructed by the enumeration of the details of his everyday existence, the authors sought to re-create Mozart's musical development by subjecting his compositions, which might be regarded as its successive stages, to a systematic and almost microscopic scrutiny, in the course of which such problems as the dating of the works, formerly regarded as settled once and for all by Köchel, were attacked afresh. At the same time the authors worked through practically the whole of the musical literature with which Mozart is known to have been or could possibly have been acquainted at any particular time, and showed that certain composers exercised a profound influence on his music of whom Jahn and others had taken little, if any, account. The names of Schobert, Eckard, Honauer, Sammartini, may serve as examples. On the basis of the stylistic criteria thus acquired they divided Mozart's musical career into no less than twenty-four distinct periods during each of which the predominance of some particular influence or influences could be traced. The figure of Mozart that emerges is not unlike that of the composer's own Don Juan. He is shown passing from model to model, in the hope of finding the perfect form that would satisfy his aspirations. He was, in the authors' view, the most susceptible of all composers to purely musical influences, with an almost feminine genius that needed fertilisation from without before it could reach its full fruition. It is certainly a stimulating point of view and it has led to some important discoveries, but it needs a more thorough testing than has yet been possible before it can be regarded as definitely established. In the meantime, as Hermann Abert has pointed out, we have been offered a sort of jig-saw puzzle that has still to be put together. We have still to define what it was that Mozart was seeking, and it is in his own musical ideals that must lie an explanation of the curious fact that certain composers of the second or third rank influenced him so greatly, whereas far bigger men, Gluck, for instance, counted for comparatively little.

One of the authors, T. de Wyzewa, died in 1917, but his colleague is still continuing his researches, and it is to be hoped that he may be able to complete the work so brilliantly begun by an examination of the remaining years of the composer's life.

6.—Schurig (Arthur) *Wolfgang Amade Mozart. Sein Leben, seine Persönlichkeit, sein Werk.* 2 vol. Insel-Verlag: Leipzig, 1928.

This work is a revised edition of the author's "*Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*," which was issued by the same publishers in 1918. On its first appearance the book created a considerable sensation, on account

of the extremely truculent tone in which it was written. Schurig conceived it his duty to knock down the romantic figure of Mozart that Jahn had so successfully established, and in the course of his onslaught dealt some hard knocks, not merely at Jahn and Köchel, upon whose temperamental incapacity to appreciate Mozart's music he is continually harping, but also at the persons of Leopold Mozart and of Constanze, the composer's wife. In the second edition, believing the battle to be already won, he softened down many of the original crudities. For his musical criticism Schurig relied almost wholly upon the work of Wyzewa and Saint Foix, his own contributions being of no great value. He is, however, an assiduous pursuer of biographical detail and has helped to fill out the story of Mozart's career with a mass of subsidiary information. Both editions of the work are furnished with a liberal selection of portraits and facsimiles, those in the first edition being of quite remarkable excellence. The chief importance of Schurig's book, however, lies in the fact that it exhibits in an extreme form the reaction of a twentieth century realist against the romantic "Mozart-ideal" of the previous century.

7. Abert (Hermann) *W. A. Mozart. Herausgegeben als fünfte, vollständig neu bearbeitete und erweiterte, Ausgabe von Otto Jahn's Mozart.* 2 vol. Breitkopf & Härtel: Leipzig, 1921.

Abert's book is now recognised as the standard work on Mozart. Its description on the title-page as a revised edition of Jahn's biography is a little misleading as it is essentially a new work. In the purely narrative passages of the book Jahn's general scheme and often his very words have been preserved, but the critical matter is entirely new. Abert was well prepared for his task, having already devoted much study to the history of eighteenth century opera. Apart from his studies of Gluck, printed in the *Gluck-Jahrbuch*, of which he is editor, he had published a monograph on Jommelli, and lengthy articles on Piccinni, Paisiello, and J. C. Bach. Mozart's debt to these and other operatic composers is shown in great detail, and the book thus does for Mozart's dramatic compositions what that of Wyzewa and Saint Foix had already done for his instrumental works. It is hardly necessary to add that as a result the old idea that Mozart's early dramatic works were far in advance of anything written by these contemporary composers—an idea already assailed by Friedrich Chrysander, Hermann Kretzschmar and Edward Dent—receives its final *coup de grâce*. Abert is, however, equally good, if less exhaustive, on the other forms treated by Mozart, and his illuminating discussion of the great piano concertos—surely the most neglected, apart from a few favoured examples, of all Mozart's works—is particularly timely. The most serious criticism that can be levelled

against his book is that it rather lacks proportion. The fusion of the new materials with the old has not always been complete: many of the chapters betray their origin in separate monographs and, excellent as they are, seem to overweight the whole. No doubt, when the results of these preliminary researches have been generally assimilated, Herr Abert will consider himself justified in pruning them a little. He would incidentally help to reduce these two portly volumes to a more manageable size. A sixth "edition" (vol. 1, 1923; vol. 2, 1924) is practically a reissue, though it contains a few additions and corrections.

8. Schiødermair (Ludwig) *Mozart, sein Leben und seine Werke*. pp. xviii. 495. C. H. Beck: Munich, 1922.

This book, by the editor of the standard edition of Mozart's letters, is the only up-to-date biography of a handy size. It is not, however, a mere boiling down of other works, but embodies the results of independent research, especially evident in the author's account of the Neapolitan schools of opera composers and their influence on Mozart. No praise can be too high for the self-denying manner in which Herr Schiødermair has compressed his material into so modest a compass. A chronological table of Mozart's works, in accordance with the latest criticism, and a well-chosen series of illustrations add to the usefulness of the book. Is it too much to hope that some enterprising publisher will commission an English translation of it?

#### E. THE OPERAS.

1. Merian (Hans) *Mozarts Meisteroperen*. pp. 291. Leipzig, 1900. Subsequently reissued by Schlesinger of Berlin, in their series of "Meisterführer."

2. Dent (Edward J.) *Mozart's Operas*. A critical study. pp. xiv. 432. Chatto and Windus: London, 1918.

3. Lert (Ernst) *Mozart auf dem Theater*. pp. xviii. 491. Schuster and Loeffler: Berlin, 1918.—3rd ed., 1921.

Of these three books on the operas, that by Mr. E. J. Dent needs no introduction to English readers. It has recently been awarded the distinction of a German translation and has been warmly welcomed by foreign critics. Herr Merian's book appears at first sight to be one of the conventional "music-guides" that are produced in such numbers in Germany, and perhaps for this reason has been rather neglected even in the author's own country. Nevertheless, although conceived on a much more ordinary plan than Mr. Dent's book, and not attempting to relate Mozart's operas to the other dramatic compositions of the time, it could not be bettered as a detailed, straightforward analysis of the music. It is written in an admirable style,

enlivened with many touches of sly humour. Herr Lert's book is of quite a different character: it discusses the operas from the point of view of the theatrical producer—in Herr Lert's case, be it said, a producer who displays a most unusual interest in æsthetic problems. Half the book is taken up with a discussion of general principles, based on a study of the dramatic theories of the eighteenth century, and the remaining half with the application of the principles to the individual operas and ballets, the early and minor works not being forgotten. It may be remarked that the author, who has tested his theories by the staging of a Mozart-cycle at Leipzig, does not believe that it is sufficient to dress the operas in what we consider to be the rococo spirit of the eighteenth century, but insists that each opera should be regarded as a still vital work of art, a careful study of which (particularly of the music) can alone suggest the proper manner of production.

C. B. OLDMAN.



## THE EAR

By the ear we mean the whole series of structures which go to make the special organ of the body which enables us to hear. Granted a knowledge of the fundamental properties of sound it should be possible to imagine the probable features of the organ of hearing. We should expect an apparatus by means of which the sound waves in the air would set in motion by resonance certain living cells in the body which would in their turn be capable of differentiating and appreciating the different sounds which acted on them. As the cells in the body in order to live and be nourished must exist in a fluid medium, we must have an apparatus capable of transferring sound waves from air conduction to a fluid medium or liquid conduction. Sound therefore reaches the actual hearing nerve cells in the same way as the noise caused by a gun being fired by a warship reaches a submarine which is totally submerged. The organ of hearing in the human being has however an additional device which increases the strength of the waves as they are transferred from the air to the liquid. This device consists of a vibrating drum with a small chain of bones (acting as levers), attached, which are so arranged as to increase the force of the sound waves picked up from the air. The auricle or pinna, which is visible to everyone on the sides of the head, is of no value whatever to us as a means of hearing and people who have had it completely cut off by accident or mutilation have perfectly normal hearing afterwards, provided there is no accompanying injury to the rest of the hearing apparatus. The auricle itself remains in us as a relic in our development from lower animals as does the appendix, and has no known function.

The first essential part of the ear is then the narrow canal or tunnel which leads inwards in the centre of the auricle. It is about an inch long, and the inner two-thirds of it is through solid bone. It is about quarter inch in diameter, practically straight, and lined with skin throughout. At the bottom of this canal, as one looks into it, is a thin membrane stretched completely across in a manner similar to the membrane stretched across an ordinary drum. The membrane is not, however, absolutely flat, but is slightly concave and cone-shaped with the tip of the cone pointing inwards. On its inner side this cone is attached to a minute bone which I will describe later, and it is its

enlivened with many touches of aly humour. Herr Lert's book is of quite a different character: it discusses the operas from the point of view of the theatrical producer—in Herr Lert's case, be it said, a producer who displays a most unusual interest in æsthetic problems. Half the book is taken up with a discussion of general principles, based on a study of the dramatic theories of the eighteenth century, and the remaining half with the application of the principles to the individual operas and ballets, the early and minor works not being forgotten. It may be remarked that the author, who has tested his theories by the staging of a Mozart-cycle at Leipzig, does not believe that it is sufficient to dress the operas in what we consider to be the rococo spirit of the eighteenth century, but insists that each opera should be regarded as a still vital work of art, a careful study of which (particularly of the music) can alone suggest the proper manner of production.

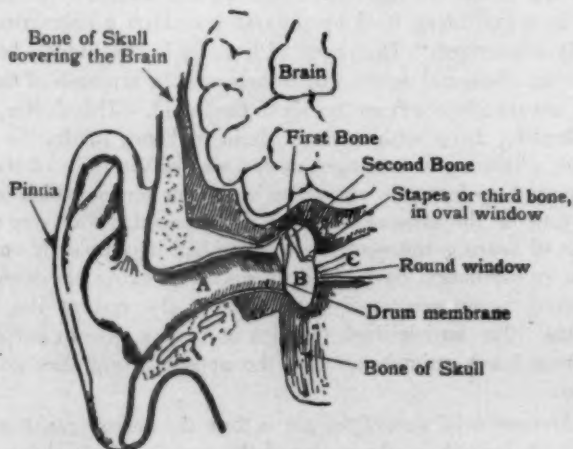
C. B. OLDMAN.

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attachment to this bone which gives the membrane its concave appearance when viewed from the canal. The cone shape of the drum is one device for rendering the drum devoid of periodicity, i.e., a tendency to vibrate on its own at a certain frequency. The drumlike membrane, although it appears white, has minute blood vessels ramifying through it and is in every sense "alive," as are other tissues of the body. The waves of sound set up in the air impinge against this drum and cause it to vibrate to a varied extent and frequency according to the strength and frequency of the sound waves which are set up. In the same way as any drum membrane may be caused to produce a note by having another drum beaten near to it. If the outer canal is blocked up for any reason (as it is by the condition known as "wax in the ear") these sound waves do not reach the drum and partial deafness is the result. The sound waves cause the drum to vibrate in a similar manner to that in which sound waves cause the disc in a telephone to vibrate and cause alterations in the electric current passing through it.



Vertical section through the ear, semi-diagrammatic. Looked at from in front.

- A is in the tunnel or external ear
- B is in the middle ear cavity.
- C is in the internal ear.

The ear so far described is known as the external ear, i.e., that part of the auditory apparatus which is in direct communication with the outer air. For the purposes of description, etc., the auditory



apparatus is divided into two other sub-divisions—the middle ear and internal ear. On the other side of the drum is a small cavity, known as the middle ear cavity, which is full of air. The middle ear cavity is completely surrounded by bone except the outer wall which is largely filled up by the drum and also excepting several small openings in the bony wall which will be described later. The air does not reach the middle ear cavity through the drum, which is absolutely air tight, but can only get there by means of a narrow tube about an inch and a half long which opens into the back of the nose. This tube is known as the Eustachian Tube, and the purpose it serves is to keep the air in the cavity (i.e., on the inner side of the drum) at the same atmospheric pressure as that on the outside of the drum in order that the drum may vibrate freely. You will find if you ascend or descend a mountain in a funicular railway, as you go up or down you get a tight feeling in your ear which is relieved instantly by swallowing. This is because the air outside gets at a lower pressure as you ascend, as compared with the air inside the middle ear cavity, or *vice versa*, and the act of swallowing opens the tube into the nose and lets the air within the middle ear cavity in or out as the case may be. One of the commonest causes of deafness is due to the blocking of the Eustachian Tube by chronic inflammation and catarrh. The middle ear cavity is not round, but is flattened from side to side in the same plane as the drum so that it is about half-inch in diameter vertically and from front to back, but only about one-sixth of an inch laterally.

We now come to the mechanism by means of which the sound waves which have been picked up by the drum are communicated through the middle ear to the internal ear. I have mentioned the fact that the tip of a small bone is attached to the middle of the drum. This minute bone, it is about a quarter of an inch in length, is the first of a series of three small bones which act as a chain of levers to transmit the vibrations of the drum across the cavity. They are attached by minute ligaments to the walls of the middle ear cavity, but are freely mobile in certain directions and have joints between them which are fundamentally exactly similar in structure to a joint like the knee joint. The amplitude or extent of the vibrations is reduced by one-third in passing through this series of levers, but the power of them is correspondingly increased. This increase in power, but reduction in amplitude, is brought about by the fact that the bones are arranged at an angle to one another. The first bone forming one arm of the angle and the second bone the other arm of the angle. The length of the first arm is one-third greater than the length of the second. The third bone present in the chain does not increase or diminish the length of the second arm, as it acts more as

a junction between it and the membrane in the internal ear. In practice, however, friction, etc., reduces this gain in power a good deal. The range of movement of these bones is definitely limited by the ligaments and their arrangement, in order to prevent any violent movement of the drum, such as is caused by an explosion, being transferred to the internal ear, which is an exceedingly delicate structure, and would very soon be badly damaged if violently acted on.

A violent explosion may cause a rupture or tear in the drum, but this is a more desirable result than the destruction of the delicate nervous structures in the middle ear, as owing to its vitality the drum soon heals again. There is an additional arrangement in the middle ear to help the drum to be sensitive to the enormous variety of sounds which are transmitted to it. This is a small muscle which is attached at one end to the wall of the cavity and at the other to the one of the three lever bones which is in direct attachment to the drum. This muscle has a nerve supply like any other muscle and can vary its contraction and relaxation. It thus can vary the tension of the drum very considerably and acts in much the same way as the screws or braces round a drum act in tightening or loosening the membrane. We are not conscious ourselves of the action of this muscle, but it acts automatically in accordance with the intensity of the vibrations which are actuating the drum from outside. By relaxing when not in use this muscle relaxes the drum, so that it never becomes stretched by being always tight.

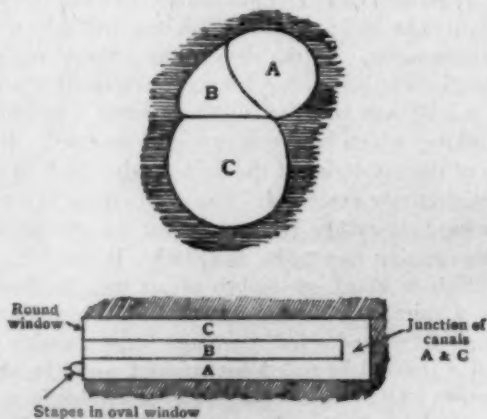
As may be imagined from the few rough measurements I have given, the outer wall of the middle ear cavity is taken up chiefly by the drum membrane. The inner wall is bony, but there is a small opening in this bony wall which is almost opposite the middle of the drum and this opening also has a membrane stretched across it. The third of the lever bones mentioned is fixed on to this membrane in such a way that the fixed portion of bone occupies nearly the whole of the opening. The opening in the bone is only about an eighth of an inch across at its widest diameter, is oval in shape, and is known as the "oval window."

The idea I wish to convey so far is that the movements of the drum are transmitted by the bones to the membrane in the oval window, which therefore vibrates similarly to the drum, but with one-third less distance of movement or excursion. The bone attached to the oval window is shaped exactly like a stirrup, it is, in fact, called the Stapes, and the foot piece of the stirrup practically fills the oval window. It is the movements of this membrane and foot piece in the oval window which convey all the sounds to the sensitive nervous part of the organ of hearing in the internal ear. The chain of levers is thus

really set between two drums, the first drum being at the end of the external canal and the second being in the oval window. The vibrations of the external drum are transmitted to the internal drum with alterations in amplitude and strength. Also the ligaments and general arrangement of the bones prevent the internal membrane being too violently acted on. The footplate of the stapes does not occupy the oval window completely, but its circumference is attached to the membrane, and so it partially fills up the oval window in the solid bone, *i.e.*, the stapes is nowhere in contact with the solid bone of the skull, but can vibrate in the oval window as freely as the membrane will allow it. As the external drum has an area nearly twenty times as great as the drum in the oval window it will be understood that, even allowing for friction and other damping down processes, the actual strength of the movements of the internal drum is considerably increased.

The part of the ear described up to now is understood very thoroughly by physiologists and anatomists, and the mechanism of its working is fairly obvious, and has been demonstrated by direct observations and experiments. In the case of the internal ear on the other hand, although its structure has been very carefully examined microscopically, nobody has yet been able to produce a satisfactory theory as to its working which has been generally accepted. Its working is in fact one of the mysteries of the living body which has been so far rather unsatisfactorily explained. The internal ear is completely surrounded by hard, ivory-like bone, except at the oval window and one other similar opening now to be described. It consists of a canal in the bone which is about one-eighth of an inch in diameter and is arranged in a spiral manner similar to some sea-shells. The spiral canal takes only two and a half complete turns round a central bony column, and if it could be rolled out straight would be about one and one-third inches long. For the purpose of describing it we will assume that it is a straight canal and not a spiral one as this will make it more easily understood and in no way alter its general plan of arrangement. The reason the internal ear canal is arranged as a spiral is probably to allow for movements of the head and body, *i.e.*, to overcome gravity changes caused by alteration in position. The bony canal is divided by membranes or longitudinal bands into three farther separate longitudinal canals. To avoid introducing long names we will call these A, B and C. These canals are all filled completely with a watery fluid, in fact, all available space in the internal ear, not occupied by tissue, is taken up by this fluid. The internal ear is known as the cochlea, and we will refer to it by this name in future.

If you can imagine yourself as a very small insect forcing a way in through the oval window, you would find yourself in canal A, and you could swim up this canal right to the end of the bony canal. Here you would find a small opening connecting with canal C. This opening is the only connection between canals A and C. You could now swim back down canal C again parallel with your journey up A until you came to the end of it, which is situated quite close to the oval window, or commencement of canal A. At this end you would find another membrane stretched across, and if you could force your way through this membrane you would find yourself in the middle ear cavity once more. This membrane is therefore very similar to that in the oval window except that it has no bone or anything attached to it. Canal B lies between these two canals A and C, but it has no direct connection of any kind with the other two and is completely surrounded by bone or canals A and C.



A diagrammatic longitudinal section of the straightened-out canal.

A B and C are in the three different canals. The shaded part represents solid bone.

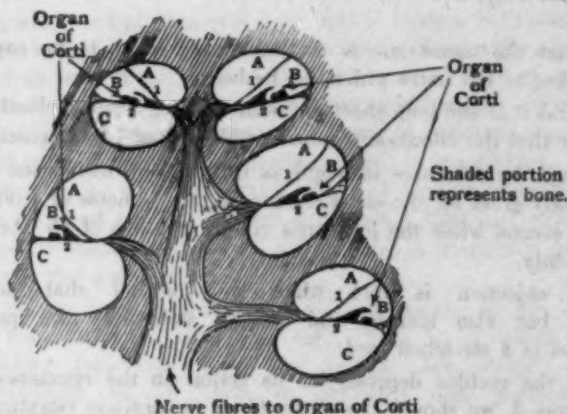
If you have followed this description so far you will understand that any vibration of the membrane in the oval window is communicated to the fluid in canal A. Therefore the fluid in canal A will vibrate. The membrane, 1, which is between canals A and B, is quite flexible and will therefore bulge when there is any movement of the fluid in A. The fluid in B will therefore also vibrate, and the membrane 2, being quite flexible, it will also bulge and pass on the



vibration to the fluid in canal C. Canal C passes its vibrations on to the membrane in the round window, which merely acts as a resilient cushion so that the vibrations required may be set up in the otherwise incompressible liquid.

It is on the membrane 2, between canals B and C, that the actual organ of hearing is situated, and the whole idea of the organ of hearing is to get this membrane vibrating so as to stimulate the nerve cells in it.

We know that the organ of hearing is in canal B by the fact that the nerve fibres of the auditory nerve can be seen microscopically all going to this organ. They reach it by passing up through the bony column which is in the centre of the spiral and then spreading out fanwise following the two and a half turns of the spiral. This is a diagram to show a section splitting the whole spiral of the cochlea in the same plane as the central column.



A B and C are letters in the respective canals. Membranes 1 and 2 are shown cut across. The organ of Corti is cut through in five different places, as it is a continuous band of cells throughout the spiral canal, and is only shown in section here. It rests all the way through the canal on the membrane 2.

In the diagram I have marked the two membranes separating the canals as 1 and 2. The organ of hearing rests on 2 and is known as the organ of Corti. It is called after an Italian physiologist named Corti, who first described it. It is simply a collection of very specialised body cells arranged in a very definite and regular manner

and extending the whole length of the cochlear canal. The nerve fibres from the auditory nerve pass to it through its entire length. There are thousands of these nerve fibres each going to a different cell in the organ of Corti.

The general theory among physiologists as regards perception of sound is that the vibrations caused by sound and set up by the communicating mechanism I have tried briefly to describe in the fluids in the cochlea, are picked out in the various parts of the organ of Corti and, by stimulating the nerve endings in them, are transmitted to the brain as sensations of sound. The first man to propound this theory in detail was a German named Helmholtz. His hypothesis was that the organ of Corti and the membrane 2 form together a series of automatically recording resonators. In the same way that each of the strings of a piano can be set in motion by the sounding of a note which corresponds with it in pitch, so also can the different fibres in membrane 2 vibrate to a certain note.

Several objections have been made to this theory and these are shortly :—

1. That the membrane is too small and short to be capable of responding to low notes which can be heard.
2. That it is one long sheet and that the fibres are so closely bound together that the vibration of separate fibres would be impossible.
3. That the difference in length of the fibres in membrane 2 is not sufficiently great for the short ones to vibrate to notes of 4,000 vibrations a second while the long ones vibrate to notes of 40 vibrations a second only.

This objection is met when we consider that not only length, but also tension and weight, determine the period of vibration of a stretched cord.

4. If the cochlea depends for its action on the resonance of the membrane 2, we should expect the fibres to continue vibrating themselves after the external stimulus had ceased. And we should also expect the fibres alongside to vibrate to a certain extent, as happens in the adjacent strings of a piano.

The answer to this is probably that the canals being filled with liquid notes are immediately damped off.

There are several factors in favour of Helmholtz's theory :—

- (1) There is a disease in which there is inability to hear high notes only. If the cochlea of such an ear is examined after death, it is found that only the short fibres of membrane 2 have degenerated.
- (2) If an animal is subjected to a single note for a long period and then killed, it is found that only one part of the organ of Corti has

degenerated. With a high note the short fibres, and with a low note the long fibres.

There are several other facts of a similar nature which can be definitely brought forward in support of Helmholtz's theory.

There are several other phenomena in connection with hearing which are worth mentioning. If you take a faint ticking watch and put it between your teeth you will hear it ticking. This is because the sound is transmitted to your cochlea direct through the bones of the head, without using the mechanism of the external and middle ear. If you next place a finger in each ear you will find that the ticking becomes much louder. This is because you have cut out all sound impressions from getting in through the ordinary way and so deadening your power of perception of the watch ticking.

The sound vibrations in this case are conducted to the cochlea by the bone, and, of course, the liquids in the cochlea also vibrate and the appropriate fibres resonate and the impression of sound is produced.

A fact which nobody has ever been able to explain is that although the carotid artery supplying blood to the brain passes within less than a 16th of an inch of the cochlea, the rush of blood through it is not noticed at all by the extremely sensitive organ of hearing, although by conduction through the bone, as in the case of a ticking watch, the vibrations must be mechanically communicated to the cochlea. If you place a stethoscope over the carotid artery of another individual you can hear the blood running through it at once. How is it, then, that you are not conscious of your own pulse, which is practically in direct contact with the organ of hearing?

Most people have heard of a disease known as an abscess of the mastoid bone near the ear. This is a small accessory leading backwards from the middle ear cavity. It is about one-third of an inch in diameter and performs no known function. If, however, any infection gets up the Eustachian Tube from the nose and affects the middle ear cavity it is very liable to get into the mastoid cavity, known as the mastoid antrum, and start an abscess forming in the bone. Owing to its proximity to the brain, this is a very dangerous condition. The mastoid cavity, however, does not do anything in the way of assisting us to hear.

BY A DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

## MUSICALL PROVERBIS AT LEKINGFELDE LODGE

THE so-called Proverbs, inscribed on the garret walls of the fifth Earl of Northumberland's Lodge in the park of Leckington, near Beverley, during the early part of the sixteenth century, have often been quoted and often transcribed from the old book into which they were copied before the demolition of the house; but we are much indebted as musicians to the late Mr. Philip Wilson for his very careful and correct collation of the original manuscript, and to Mr. Peter Warlock for issuing it in so artistic and convenient a form.\* Our only regret is, that the editors did not annotate the proverbs, and explain some of the more difficult expressions contained therein.

There are, however, one or two points in their short preface to which I desire to draw attention, as, owing to its brevity, a wrong impression may be gathered as to the probable authorship of the verses. For the heading "Here beginneth the prologue of this little treatise following, &c."—which, by the way, is incorrectly quoted—is not prefixed to the proverbs, as the reader might suppose; it prefaces a metrical account of the descent of the Percys, Earls of Northumberland, which consists of a prologue of six stanzas and a treatise of ninety stanzas written by a certain William Peeris (or Peers, to use the present English form of the name). It will, however, assist us in our consideration of the date and character of the book in which it appears.

Let me give, then, in short form, the names of the various poems contained within the covers of M.S.Reg.18 D II., now in the safe custody of the British Museum.

1. The Last Testament of John Ludgate, Monk of Bury. (The original was written about 1450).
2. The Troy Book, by John Lydgate. (Original c. 1420.)
3. The Story of Thebes, by John Lydgate. (Original c. 1422.)
4. A Treatise between Truth and Information, by William Cornish, 1503.
5. A Dirge on the Death of Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland, killed 1489. By John Skelton.

\*The Muscally Prouerbis in the Garet at the New Lodge in the Parke of Lekingtonfelde. Ed. by Philip Wilson. H. Milford. Limited to 500 copies printed on hand made paper. 5s. net.



6. The Assembling of the Gods; perhaps by John Lydgate.
7. The reigns of the Kings of England (by John Lydgate as far as Henry VI, and extended by a later writer to Henry VIII).
8. The Armes of Certain Kings and Cities (translated from the Latin).
9. The Descent of the Percy Family, by William Peers—as far as the marriage (about the year 1516-17) of the fifth Earl's daughter Margaret to Sir Henry Clifford, heir-apparent to the Lord Clifford, whom he succeeded in the year 1523.
10. A transcription of the Proverbs inscribed in the roofs and on the walls of Leckingfield Manor House, Leckingfield New Lodge, and Wressil Castle.

Now the writing, scrollwork and illumination of these various contents presuppose three different scribes, whom we will call A, B and C. *Scribe A* (the earliest) was responsible for sections 2 and 3, which were produced between the years 1455 and 1462, when these works by Lydgate were copied and partly illuminated for Sir William Herbert (Earl of Pembroke, 1468), whose daughter Maud married the 4th Earl of Northumberland about the year 1476. Early in the reign of Henry VIII the illuminations were completed in the Flemish style. *Scribe B* (the next in date) was the writer of Cornish's Treatise, temp. Henry VII. *Scribe C* (the last) was responsible for sections 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. He worked in the early years of Henry VIII's reign, and these sections, which are all in the same handwriting, include the treatise by William Peers. Now Peers was not only "a Clerke and Preste," but, as the heading of his treatise informs us, "Secretary" to the fifth Earl of Northumberland, and his prologue certainly gives the impression that either he penned it himself, or that it was written under his immediate supervision; I am inclined to think the former was the case, for the clergy were the *literati* of the day. So the Secretary, having also transcribed the Proverbs written on the walls of his master's houses at Leckingfield and Wressil, prefaced them with his own composition and dedication, added copies of the poet Skelton's Dirge and some of Lydgate's works brought up to date, and closed them, I believe, with the transcription of Lydgate's Last Will and Testament. In the latter years of the sixteenth century this collection passed into the hands of the Earl of Arundel through his mother, who was the fifth Earl of Northumberland's sister, and it was somewhat confusedly bound up with the earlier transcriptions of Lydgate's two books and Cornish's Treatise: and in this form it has remained, except for a rough 17th Century Index of Contents.

The question is: Who was the author of these Proverbs? The

immediate answer would probably be the Private Secretary; but skilful clerk, worthy priest, and dutiful servant as he may have been, I do not think, judging from the composition he has left us, that William Peers had either the wit or the forcefulness to produce the trite sayings which found their places in the various rooms at Leckingfield and Wressil. There was only one man who could write them as they are written, and that was John Skelton, Priest and Poet Laureate. For the attribution of their authorship to him, I would adduce the following reasons: Skelton, who was born about 1460, and died in 1529, was much patronised by the nobility—this very volume contains the Dirge he composed in honour of the fifth Earl of Northumberland's father, together with a little quatrain addressed to one of the trustees of the young heir. The fifth Earl was as great a patron of letters and arts as he was a great builder, and he extended his favours to the poet until the latter, about the year 1522, had to seek sanctuary at Westminster from the wrath of Cardinal Wolsey, whom he had too boldly ridiculed in his poetry.

Again, in this collection is also found Cornish's Treatise, which, in the sixteenth century, was published as one of Skelton's compositions, and by competent critics of the present day, is believed to have been his work, or that of some kindred poet of his time. The text of this curious appeal made by Cornish when in prison at the Fleet, is chiefly known nowadays by the version published by Hawkins in his History of Music (Novello's edition, Vol. I., page 353); but Hawkins printed only a part of it; he transcribed the so-called "parable," but omitted the four-stanza "prologue." Now, one of Skelton's peculiarities is his practice of suddenly introducing into his verse Latin words and quotations; for instance, his satire, "Speke, Parrot," written about 1515, is full of them. In Cornish's Parable, however, there are none, but in the Prologue to it there are many. There we find such as these: "Qui ambulat in tenebris nescit quo vadit"—"Non dormit Judas"—"Dies illa, dies irae"—"Ite maledicti, take that for your wrong," and it appears to me that, while Cornish may have conceived the ideas and musical similes expressed in his parable (as he claims to have done), he nevertheless secured Skelton to write the prologue and to put some finishing touches to the whole, for the parable certainly gives the impression of a lack of consecutive method and thought. Now, in the Musical Proverbs also, we have many Latin quotations. "Ite maledicti, take it for thy wrong," in the 29th stanza, reminds us very forcibly of the words already quoted in the prologue to Cornish's parable; in that same prologue, also, we have an instance of the use of the word "conveying" for "contriving" (Shakespeare uses it in this sense in his

*King Lear*)—"Swete conveyinge" the author of the prologue calls it, "curius conveyinge" writes the author of the "Proverbs" in his second stanza.

Yet why, one may ask, could not Cornish himself have composed these "Musical Proverbs," so similar to his parable in their allusion to music and musical instruments? I think for one reason, the frequency of Latin words in these "Proverbs," and the entire absence of them in the parable, preclude this supposition; also, the word "margin"—used technically as I understand it, for the marked scale of notes on the edge of the monochord—occurs in both the parable and the proverbs; but in the former it is spelt "margyn," in the latter "margent" (twice): and when we consider the proverbs as a whole, for we must remember that the musical stanzas form but a small part of them, they bespeak an author who was thoroughly well versed in the philosophical thought and teaching of his day, knowledge such as only one who had studied at Oxford or Cambridge would have had; and whilst Cornish was a "Chapel-man," Skelton was a graduate of the latter University and Laureate of the former.

Placing then the musical ideas contained in the parable and in the proverbs side by side, must we conclude that Skelton was an open plagiarist? I do not think so. For some reason or other, perhaps because the Earl, or a member of his family, was very devoted to music, musical proverbs were needed for the garret in the New Lodge. Skelton had helped Cornish twelve or fifteen years before, and Cornish now could help Skelton; and such a collaboration explains the similarity of expressions between the parable and the proverbs with, on the one hand, the difference of style, and, on the other, the very technical knowledge of the art and practice of music which only a working musician and composer, such as Cornish, would be likely to possess. Skelton, in his short poem, "Against a Comely Coystrowne (groom)," in which he satirizes a third-rate minstrel and would-be gentleman, shows us that he himself was not ignorant of music; but here we do not find the very intimate phraseology of the Music School. As for the versification, in his diatribe "Against Venomous Tongues," Skelton uses similar four or six-line stanzas, and "in the roof of My Lord's library" at Leckingfield there were such evident Skeltonian stanzas as

" In tyme of prosperite  
Remember adversite,  
Worldly felicitye  
Hathe no longe surete."

I therefore consider that, whereas we are beholden to Mr. Secretary Peers for his transcription of these interesting verses, it is to Skelton

we owe them as author, evincing, as they do, his pretty wit and outspoken criticism.

In conclusion, a word as to their date. The "Household Book" of the fifth Earl gives us a possible clue. Mention is frequently made therein of the removal of the family from their residence at Wressil Castle to other seats belonging to the Earl, but particularly to Leckington. In the year 1518 we find the Earl giving an order under his sign-manual "at my Maynour" (i.e., manor-house) "of Leckingtonfelde"; but in 1519 the household goes into residence "at the New Lodge in the Park"; so I presume that the new house was a-building during the years, say, 1516-1518, and ready for occupation in 1519. It was in this New Lodge that the "Musical Proverbs" were inscribed, and if we suppose that that work was carried out during the year 1518 I do not think we shall be far wrong, Mr. Philip Wilson having already suggested a date between 1516 and 1528.

FRANCIS W. GALPIN.



## THE ESCHQUIER VIRGINAL: AN ENGLISH INVENTION

MUSICAL historians have been much puzzled over the meaning of the instrument called Eschequier, also known as Echiquier or Exaquir, but its English origin is placed beyond any question by the fact that William de Machaut, a musical Canon of Rheims, in a poem of the year 1360, describes it as "Eschaquiel d'Angleterre." Elsewhere, the same French composer, in 1367, in his "Prise d'Alexandrie," alludes to an "Exquaquiel." Thus, in the second half of the fourteenth century, French writers seemed to take it for granted that the musical instrument called Eschequier or Chequer was an English invention. Another French writer of the fifteenth century, Molinet, in his "Chanson sur la Journée de Guinegate," refers to "bons Echiquiers" among musical instruments. Mr. Henry Davey, in the new edition of his *History of English Music* (1921) quotes Van der Straeten's ingenious explanation that the Virginal, Spinet, or Clavicymbalum, was invented in England, but he cautiously adds: "It is a guess only, and I can offer no evidence beyond Van der Straeten's." The following evidence is offered of its English provenance.

To begin with, the earliest recorded name for a Clavicymbalum, or Clavicembalo, is under date of 1404, in the Rules of the Minnesingers. However, the English Chequer (Eschequier) was known half a century previously, and we can justly regard it as the early form of the Virginal. In 1371, Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, had a minstrel who played on the "Eschequier." Doubtless, this minstrel was an Englishman, for, in 1375, Philip had an English harper called Walter, who also was proficient on the Rote: "Gautier l'Engles, (l'Anglais), qui joue aussi de la rote." (*Musique et Musiciens de la Vieille France*, M. Brenet, Paris, 1911). Twelve years later, in 1387, King John of Aragon, brother-in-law of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, was delighted with the strains of an "exaquir," described as "a keyboard instrument with strings." In addition to this evidence of the Eschiquier d'Angleterre, or the English Chequer, so called from having had its origin in England\* and regarded as such in the mid-fourteenth century, it affords me much pleasure to bring forward a

\* In the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1925, Pt. I, *Arabian influence on musical theory* by H. G. Farmer, occurs the sentence—"The Arabian qānūn, or zither, became the European canon, whilst the European instrument known as the eschaquiel or exaquir was surely derived from the Arabian mishqar or al-shaqira." To say that the qānūn "became" the canon, a name which Euclid gave to the monochord about 300 B.C., assigns a rather early date for Arabian influence. In the second statement "surely" seems to suggest a mere philological guess, but the idea may be worth investigating.—[Ed.]

most interesting reference to it in the Roll of Bishop Braybrook, of London, under date of 1393, in which an entry appears of payment of the sum of 3s. 4d. to a Virginalist. The payment is noted as given "to one playing on the Chekkers at Stepney" (9th Report of Hist. MSS. Com. 1., p. 59).

The Eschequier, or Chequer, also known as Spinet, or Eapinette, doubtless had its origin from the Plectrum, or Check, or Jack. And just as Spinet came from *Spina*, *épine*, (a plectrum or thorn), so also the name Virginal came from *Virga*, equivalent to *Spina* or *épine*. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that, in 1477, Horwood was appointed at Lincoln Cathedral, to teach choristers "playing on the clavychordes." However, the earliest description of the Virginal was by Virdung, in 1511. Formerly, it was believed that the reference to the Virginal in the "Leckingfield Proverbs" went back to the reign of Henry VII, but the recent (1924) publication of these Proverbs, edited by the late Philip Wilson (Oxford University Press) fixes the date as "circa, 1516-23."\* However, an instrument not unlike a Virginal appears among the carvings of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, circa 1450, while a carving of a Virginal is to be found in the roof of Manchester Cathedral, circa 1467. Moreover, it is certain that King Henry VIII, in the early part of his reign, had "a payre of Virginals," and, in 1521, Lord Montague also possessed a Virginal.

Rev. Canon Galpin in his "Old English Instruments of Music" (1910) rightly dismisses the supposition that the Eschequier, or Chequer, may mean a chessboard, for, as is definitely stated by King John of Aragon, it is described as "an instrument like an organ but with strings," and he tells that the name refers to the jacks which, appearing in a row across the soundboard suggested the idea of chessmen, which was enhanced by the action of checking or repulsing the strings as they rose to pluck them. I quite agree with this view, but I cannot acquiesce in the derivation of the word Virginal as "arising from the fact that this instrument was specially favoured by Virgins or Ladies of the period." Although Canon Galpin has the authority of the late Mr. A. J. Hipkins (echoing the view of Dr. John Minshen in 1617=cymbaleum virginæum) for this derivation, I feel tolerably certain that the name arose from *Virga* or *Check*, or *Jack*, the conspicuous feature of the action of the Virginal.†

\* See above p. 150.

† Canon Galpin, to whom this was submitted, writes:—(1) No clerk would be likely to make an adjective "virgin-alis" out of "virg-a." (2) Luscinus (1530) simply speaks of "pectra"; Mersenne (1636) of "ligna" and "regule"; Kircher (1650) of "pectra" "lignula" and "subeilis." Surely, if the jacks were called "virgæ," these authors would have known it and have used the word. (3) Galilei (16th century) calls the clavicymbalum (harpsichord) the "clavicordium matronale," because ladies used it; and we know that the spinet was used in the 15th and 16th centuries in the religious houses of women—hence clavicordium virginale.

All readers of Shakespeare's Sonnets\* are familiar with the lines in which the Jack action of the Virginal is alluded to :—

“ How oft when thou, my music, music play'st,  
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds,  
With thy sweet fingers when thou gently sway'st  
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds.  
Do I envy these Jacks that nimble leap  
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand! ”

Yet, though the Virginal was in vogue in England under Henry VII, it is strange that previous writers have not succeeded in tracing a reference to the name earlier than 1530, when it occurs in the Privy Purse Expenses of King Henry VIII, as “ a payer of Virginals.” However, there are at least four references to it prior to the year 1530. In a letter from the Milanese Ambassador to the Duke of Milan, dated from London, October 11th, 1513, we read that King Henry VIII, among other accomplishments, was able to play well on “ the Virginals and Flute.” Again, in the King's Book of Payments, under date of March 8th, 1516-17, John Dingley was paid 21s. 8d. for “ a pair of Virginals.” A third reference occurs in July, 1517, when one of the boys of the Chapel Royal played on the Virginal; while a fourth is to be noted in July, 1520, when the Princess Mary played the Virginal for three French nobles. Finally, it is to be added, that John Heywood was appointed Virginal Player to the Court in 1526, and was occasionally given a *douceur* of £6 18s. 4d., in addition to his ordinary salary, as “ player of the Virginals,” of fifty shillings a quarter (1528-1558).

W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD.

\* The 128th.

## OLD ENGLISH HARMONY

Of many a branch of investigation it may be truly said that its origins are lost in the mists of antiquity, that there never was a time when it was not. Of harmony—by which is here implied all forms of music in which two or more “voices” or parts are combined for simultaneous performance—this cannot be said. For if polyphonic music was ever composed, or even performed, more than 1100 years ago, there is no record or trace of it in contemporaneous literature, nor is there any indication in (let us say) the tenth century that there was any science or practice of previous times upon which to draw. The non-existence of harmony before the year 800 may be taken as axiomatic, and the fact that we have some sort of a *terminus a quo* in our researches, fragmentary though the evidence of the earlier periods be, is in some sense an encouragement, as confining our study within reasonable limits.

John Dunstable, who died in 1453, spent the greater part of his life abroad. As in the fifteenth century, so in the twentieth, the prophet is without honour in his own country, and the principal recent efforts to explore the mediæval music of England have been made by foreigners: Van den Borren, Ludwig, Riemann, Lederer, Wolf, to mention a few only. But the musical history of England does not begin with Dunstable, who merely marks the end of one stage—and that not by any means the first—and the beginning of the next. There is no less than 500 years of musical history behind Dunstable (850 if we include plain-song), and when we look back to the date of his death we are going *rather less than half-way*, in point of time, to the first traces in England of the origins of the arts of counterpoint and harmony. To regard the art of vocal composition in parts as being one of the products of the Renaissance, on a parallel with the art of printing and so forth, is to have the wrong mental starting-point: Byrd, Palestrina and Vittoria were not “classical,” but “perpendicular,” to borrow architectural terms. Their art was not a revolution, but an evolution, a product of many centuries of art and science, elaborately worked out and studied with



minute patience. Harmony is essentially a mediæval art, and bears probably more traces of its mediæval origins to-day than does any other art or craft, and it is still one of our most intimate links with the centuries which have gone by.

Of the times before Dunstable relatively little is known, and the history of these five centuries has to be pieced together from scattered information. It is much to be hoped that the publication of the *Tudor Church Music* by the Carnegie Trust will encourage more investigators to enter the fields which lie behind the Tudor period. At present these fields seem to be deserted by all but a very few: these few alone realise how important, and how interesting, is the work waiting to be done. Of recent years, i.e., since the publication of the first two volumes of the *Oxford History of Music* in 1901 and 1905 by the late Professor Wooldridge, the only two attempts at all exhaustive are both by Germans—Friedrich Ludwig and Victor Lederer. They are typical pieces of German research, in its weak and strong qualities: only German patience could collect such a mass of information as that contained in the *Repertorium Organorum ac Motetorum Vetustissimi Stili*—to allow the work its full title—published by Ludwig a few years before the war; and only the rash German ambition for "brilliant" or "original" scholarship and reputation for its own sake could produce such unreliable and useless work as Lederer's *Ueber Heimat und Ursprung der Mehrstimmigen Tonkunst*. Much good work has been done, mainly in magazine articles, by Riemann and Wolf.

The serious history of the art in England before 1453 has yet to be written. No historian hitherto has had all the available material under examination, and we are still in the stage of enquiry. Wooldridge (*op. cit.*) and Davey ("History of English Music," Curwen, second edition, 1921) are the only two English writers who have not dismissed the subject in a relatively small space: the former alone has attempted to deal with it exhaustively, and he almost completely ignores the important liturgical aspect, while Mr. Hughes-Hughes, writing of Davey's History in the article "Histories of Music" in Grove's Dictionary (1904 edition) dismisses it as "probably not of permanent value." This criticism would perhaps be modified with respect to the 1921 edition, which contains a great deal of valuable information, mixed up, unfortunately, with much that is questionable and even inaccurate. It is only fair to add on the other side that Sir Richard Terry speaks very highly of the value of Davey's History (see preface to the 1921 edition, page xiv). Ormond Anderton's "Early English Music" (*Office of Musical Opinion*, 1920) is only working over the same materials again. The pertinent

chapters in Stanford and Forsyth's "History of English Music" (Macmillan, 1917), based largely upon Wooldridge, present a readable summary of what was known twenty years ago. Walker's History is good, but takes us no further than the Oxford History.

Of the scanty materials for the early centuries a new fragment has recently come to the surface, throwing important light on this unknown or partially-known period. In December last I had the opportunity of giving some description of the fourteenth-century Worcester MSS. and their implications before the Musical Association, and will not here repeat what will shortly be printed in their *Proceedings*. But the editor of MUSIC AND LETTERS (knowing that a paper read before a Society must be of a reasonable length, and that sundry points may have been omitted or only touched upon for that reason) has kindly suggested that there may be more to say about the Worcester MSS., and has opened his columns to me for that purpose.

The Worcester Chapter Library is housed in the closed triforium over the south aisle of the nave of the Cathedral. We will introduce ourselves to its treasures (lost treasures in the first instance, alas!) by a quotation from Cardinal Gasquet's "Henry VIII and the English Monasteries" (London, 1889, vol. II, p. 424).

"A masse booke of . . . with prycksonge wheryn is 5 parts and 4 parts. Four prycksonge mass books of paper. Two other books—one with anthems and *salves*\* in him. Four little prycksong books of masses. Five mass books of 5 parts. Five books—with *Salve Festa Dies* and scrolls belonging to the 2 paper books. In them, be the 5 parts of other songs—a singing note book 'burdyde'—a parchment book of *Salves* 'burdyde'—2 masses of 5 parts in parchment scrolls—a paper book of 4 parts—a paper book with the invitatories, *Benedictus*, *Te Deum* in prickynge. There be 3 or 4 anthems in scroll."†

This appetising list is the inventory of Worcester Cathedral's music, made shortly before the Dissolution. As far as can be traced, none of the contents survive. But what does exist to-day is the remains of a separate period, at least 200 years older. Long before the time of the Dissolution the fourteenth-century MSS., with which we are now concerned, had been relegated to the binders' hands as waste. The wheel has gone round, and the sixteenth-century singers' music has all disappeared, while the fourteenth-century "rubbish" (as it was esteemed in the sixteenth century, no doubt) has been recovered from the backs of sundry MSS. of the Chapter Library, as well as from

\* Probably *Salve regina*, not *Salve festa dies*.

† B. M. Harley, 604.

four strayed volumes, three in Oxford (Bodleian, Auct. f infra i 3, and Bodley 862; and Magdalen 100) and one in the British Museum (Add. 25031).

The total amount of Worcester Harmony still existing is by no means inconsiderable, for more than a hundred examples survive. Many of these, however, are represented only by detached parts, or by two parts from a composition for three or four voices; while others, and among them some of the most interesting specimens, have lost a strip from the top or the side when subsequently used as flyleaves in binding.

That Worcester was an important, if not the principal, centre of English musical culture in the fourteenth century seems (in the present state of our knowledge) highly probable, for Bury St. Edmunds is the only other locality which can show as yet any traces of a "school of composition": while out of 480 examples of English Harmony before 1453 which I have listed (this figure includes the Pepysian but not the Old Hall MS.) Worcester is responsible for more than a fourth part. Of the remaining items, 224 are of unknown provenance, while 94 only can be tentatively or certainly located in other parts of England.

In the interesting task of localising the first origins of harmony, in addition to the connection which has now been traced between Worcester, Reading and Winchester, the relations of the early thirteenth-century school of Paris musicians, led by Léonin and Pérotin, with England also needs elucidation, for traces of acquaintance with their work are found at Worcester, and still more so at Bury St. Edmunds. Further, it is from a Bury MS. (British Museum Royal B 6: the Anonymus IV of Coussemaker's *Scriptores*, Vol. I.) that we learn how the renown of the English musicians, Makeblite of Winchester, Blakesmit (perhaps a remote ancestor of that daughter who sang in the village choir at Streatham), and Johannes with the queer surname "filius dei" (? Godson or Goodson) had reached Paris.\* If I am right in my conjecture that Coussemaker's Anonymus IV was a young monk of Bury who was studying at Paris, the "treatise" is an expansion of the notes he took at the lectures (see M. Gastoué's reminder quoted by Dom Gatard below the next section). Wooldridge, in the Oxford History of Music, Vol. I., p. 154, says: "The ' &c.' which occurs so frequently in this MS. is

\* A "Johannes filius Dei" is mentioned in the Visitation records of St. Paul's, London, in 1295 (Dugdale, the History of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, 1658, p. 220: quoted by Ludwig in *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, 1923, p. 315).

to be accounted for by the apparent fact that the treatise was delivered in the form of lectures; it would seem that at the ' &c.' the author abandoned the MS. for a time, and supplied comments and explanations extempore." But surely the "student" explanation will be the more obvious, and will have the additional advantage of explaining the presence of a Paris professor's MS. in the monastery of St. Edmundsbury. Of Thomas of St. Julian (c. 1250) we are told in this MS. that he was "long resident in Paris"—Professor Wooldridge's translation of *Parisius antiquus*—"but wrote not after their fashion" (i.e., of Léonin and Pérotin) "but was proficient in the methods of the older school."

This real practical music, as actually sung in the Cathedral Church of Worcester in the Middle Ages, is of unique evidential value: for up to the present most of our historical text-books are built up on the doctrines of the mediæval theorists—and not always contemporaneous theorists either: Glareanus, Gafurius, Zarlino and Morley are still drawn upon far too often—and that though the relatively small value of the theoretical treatises when compared with the actual MSS., and their actually misleading nature when studied in isolation, has been mentioned more than once by those who have every right to speak with authority. Thus:—

"Hucbald's treatise can be regarded as merely the final results of his attempts to fit into a theoretic system the species of polyphonic music common to the time" (Rieman, *Musik-Lexikon*).

"La doctrine mesurée s'est formée peu à peu, elle commence à paraître dans les œuvres des compositions avant d'être codifiée par les théoriciens" (P. Aubry, *Cent Motets*; Vol. III, p. 115).

"Le moment où une théorie apparaît pour la première fois ne saurait être pris pour la date réelle des faits qu'elle expose: car les théoriciens se bornent souvent à codifier des idées qui leur sont antérieures" (Jules Combarieu, *Histoire de la Musique*, Paris 1918, Vol. I, p. 279).

"It would be distinctly unwise to leave the treatises of the theorists altogether on one side, but it is necessary to be very careful about the sense of the texts, and not to imitate some modern writers who have skilfully (though with no dishonest intent) made arbitrary cuts, blending passages differing in age by one or two hundred years—and all in accordance with preconceived ideas. The study of the mediæval theorists should therefore be embarked upon with every possible precaution. First of all it is necessary to note with M. Gastoné (*Origines du Chant Romain*) that these writings, in the form in which we possess them, are far from representing the oral



teaching of the master, being in the majority of cases nothing but the rough drafts of lectures, or even notes taken down by students at the lectures: and every professor knows by experience how reliable is the version of his work as it appears in the students' notebooks." (*Plainchant*, by Dom Gatard O.S.B., The Faith Press, 1921, p. 44: Dom Gatard is speaking here of Plainsong, not of mensurate music: but the argument is not thereby weakened.)

As to the subsequent fate of this Worcester school, it may possibly be lawful to conjecture that it shifted about the close of the fourteenth century to Oxford, where Walter de Odington, of Evesham, had paved the way a hundred years earlier, where many other eminent theorists had taught, among them John de Muris and John de Garlandia, perhaps. We may believe some kind of extinction or reaction to have occurred at Worcester, to account for the contemptuous way in which the musical MSS. were sent to the binders' workshop, at a date well before the Dissolution; and that some kind of a gap arose before the second or later school, the repertoire of which has been quoted above, arose in the late fifteenth century. This later school was probably in closer touch with the rest of the musical world than was the former, for knowledge was by now becoming more widely diffused, and less liable to be concentrated in favourable centres.

But the few indications which we possess are really quite insufficient to provide more than ground for conjecture: a lawful proceeding when we have nothing further to work with, and when our conjectures do not conflict with what seems to be ascertained fact. Hard and fast divisions are of course wrong: tendencies are all that we can discern: and from 1175 onwards there was probably simultaneous movement in the contrary direction, from Paris to Oxford, and thence to Reading and Worcester. From the rise of the Universities they must, in the nature of things, have speedily become the junctions from which advances in knowledge and technique were radiated. The importance of Worcester in the early days may perhaps be due partly (as Dame Laurentia MacLachlan has said\*) to the unique way in which it preserved the best of Anglo-Saxon culture, protected by the venerated personality of its sainted Bishop, Wulstan, instead of undergoing some kind of *bouleversement* in favour of Norman culture as elsewhere: and partly to its geographical position as the meeting-place of three or more confluent streams of musical tradition. Worcester is near enough to the Welsh Marches

\* Preliminary note to a projected facsimile of the famous Worcester Antiphoner (F 160), later taken over by the Paléographique Musicale, and now in course of publication.



to have received some of the early Celtic traditions : it is practically in the " Westcuntre " spoken of by the Bury Anonymus : it is in the same district as Evesham, Odington's monastery : and it is not so far West as to be out of touch with Oxford and Reading : it has traditional links with Winchester and with York, both musical centres of importance in pre-Norman days.

DOM ANSELM HUGHES O.S.B.

## THE CLAIMS OF TONIC SOLFA

*These two articles are in reply to Dr. Whittaker's article in the October and January numbers. The numerals in brackets refer to some comments made below by Dr. Whittaker.*

Dr. WHITTAKER, in the October number of *MUSIC AND LETTERS*, p. 316, writes thus: "A common argument is that notes on the staff are pictorial in appearance and convey to the mind the contour of a passage, whereas the horizontal arrangement of letter-names presents merely a dead level." He proceeds to show that staff is not consistent in this and then dismisses the matter. The fact, however, that staff is not entirely consistent does not invalidate the argument altogether.

In reading Example 1 (a) we see a picture or design which we recognise at once as the scale of C major, and all we examine closely is the first note and the last. In reading the words on this page we do not look separately at every letter—we read words, not letters.



Ex. 1 (a) we read as a musical "word," and Ex. 1 (b) we see as the design of the C major arpeggio and not as thirteen isolated notes. Similarly we read all the ordinary chords not as collections of unconnected notes, but as musical entities. The pictorial arrangement of staff enables us to read them as units.

When, in ordinary reading, we come to a word unknown to us, we often halt and stumble because we have to examine the letters of which the word is made. We see it for the first time as a collection of letters and not as a word. When we read some of the musical

moderns we often stumble over an unusual chord, because we cannot read it as a unit, but have to spell out the separate notes which make the chord. When we meet the same chord again we see it as a familiar design and we read it as a unit. Thus the statement (*ibid*: "since the letters call up to the mind their position in the scale, pictorial representation is of small account") would be a sound argument if it were true that we read music as a number of isolated notes. If it is admitted that we read "note designs," chords and not bundles of unrelated notes then, also, mere reduction of accidentals by putting a passage into tonic solfa does not, of necessity, make it easier to play. Dr. Whittaker takes the minims following Wotan's Abschied in the "Walküre," and by writing the passage in tonic solfa reduces the number of accidentals from 66 to 37. We read such a passage as this as a series of chords, each of which presents a familiar picture or design when written in staff. We can reduce the number of accidentals by writing the passage in tonic solfa, but we lose the picture of the chords given by staff.<sup>(1)</sup> I therefore contend that it is a "non sequitur" that, because we reduce the number of accidentals in a passage by writing it in tonic solfa, that therefore we make it easier to read.



In Ex. 2, the first bars of Chopin's study in E $\flat$  Op. 10, No. 11, what actually do we read? We see that in any one bar the bass and two notes of the treble are the same, so that we read them once and turn our attention to the changing top note of the treble. Surely the design of staff helps us in such a passage as this. Examples of this sort could be multiplied almost indefinitely—any music with any design or form in it at all, has that form portrayed by staff and thus we are helped in reading it.

The late Stephen Hawley simplified a number of the piano classics by making many changes of key signature. As Dr. Whittaker says,

this would have been done automatically had the music been written in tonic solfa. But surely the fact that we do not always use staff as well as we might is not a criticism of staff, but a criticism of ourselves. Notation can be improved, of course, but it is on the basis of staff, with its power of presenting to us the design and form of a piece of music, that improvement seems more probable.

STANLEY WHYBROW.

It is a good thing that the Editor of MUSIC AND LETTERS has opened his columns to a discussion on the merits, or demerits, of the system known as tonic solfa. Discussions on such subjects are always useful, for, though they may not lead to any definite conclusions, they enable musicians, and other persons, to hear both sides of a debated question, and so help them to form their own conclusions. Dr. Whittaker has put the case in favour of the solfa theories in as forcible a way as is possible, and, if his views do not commend themselves to other musicians, the fault is not his.

The tonic solfa system has been in existence for over half a century; it has been tested, so that we are now able to discuss it with knowledge of its practical working. It is based on the principle of what is called "key relationship," that is, the relations of the sounds used in music to one central tone, a key-tone, to represent which the syllable "doh" is taken. The absolute pitch of tones is not taken into account, and all keys are treated alike. All the tones in use measure their places from the key-tone, "doh," and every sound in the scale is supposed to give a certain mental effect; doh, the key-tone, is the strong or firm tone, ray, the second of the scale, the rousing or hopeful tone and so on. To meet the principle of the relationship of sounds to the key-tone a special notation has been devised.<sup>(2)</sup>

To estimate the value of this system it should be considered both from the side of its practical utility from the performer's point of view, whether an instrument or the voice is used, and also from the theoretical point of view, whether or not it enables the student to understand and to speak the language of music.

Beginning with practical performance on an instrument, we are at once confronted with the fact that in all such performance the player does not work from relative, but from absolute pitch. The violinist tunes his strings to four fixed sounds, and it is in relation to these sounds that he decides how to produce his effects. All keys are by no means alike to him; the pitch of the tones he is required

to produce regulates his methods of production. If he plays from the solfa notation he will be obliged (as Dr. Whittaker has noticed) to turn his notes into absolute pitch, that is to say, he will first have to consider the relation of the tone to the key-tone, and then what the absolute pitch of the sound is. Moreover, if the piece he plays modulates to new keys, he will be obliged to consider a new set of tone-relations whenever the key is changed. Obviously his difficulties will be far greater than if he played from the staff notation, which gives him the absolute pitch of every note.<sup>(3)</sup>

In the case of wind instruments similar conditions prevail; in fact, the general rule is that methods of production depend on the absolute pitch of the notes that are played. For obvious reasons orchestral players fight shy of the solfa notation.<sup>(4)</sup>

In the case of key-board instruments, such as the piano and organ, there are not the same difficulties to contend with, for the method of production does not depend on the pitch of the note; but even here the solfa notation throws obstacles in the path of the player. The difference between the black and white notes obliges the performer to adopt different fingering for different keys<sup>(5)</sup>; and, as on key-board instruments chords are constantly used, the difficulty of turning the solfa symbols into absolute pitch is greater than when only one note is played.

It is said that the solfa is an improvement on the staff notation, because time divisions are more clearly shown, and fewer accidentals are necessary. Now the essential point of a good notation is, not only to enable the performer easily to see what notes are to be played or sung, but to place them in such a way that the whole context can be grasped. In staff notation the ladder on which the notes are placed gives the absolute pitch of every note, and enables the performer to take in, not only one note and one chord, but also the whole of a phrase. And the grouping of notes according to their time-values affords, except in exceptional cases, a clear indication of the rhythmic movement of the music.<sup>(6)</sup> The difficulties occasioned by the use of different values for the time unit are not inherent in the nature of the notation, but arise from certain conventions. But in the solfa notation there is no ladder to assist the eye. The letters, that stand for the solfa syllables, have to be taken in one by one, and there is nothing to help the performer to realise the grouping of the notes in their phrase-divisions.<sup>(7)</sup> In the case of successive chords each chord must be considered by itself; it is extremely difficult to trace its connection with its neighbours.<sup>(8)</sup> And when we remember that the same symbols are used for twelve different tonalities, and that the performer has to consider the absolute pitch of every letter, we can



hardly be surprised that after fifty years trial solfa has, as Dr. Whittaker remarks, "been used little for instrumental work."<sup>(9)</sup>

But if the solfa notation for key-board music presents difficulties that are not met with in the staff notation, what can be said about full scores written in this way? Anyone looking at the specimen of a full score in solfa notation given by Dr. Whittaker in the January number of *MUSIC AND LETTERS*, will realise the difficulty of identifying any chordal progression by looking at the letter series. The extract from "Tristan and Isolde" is comparatively easy; to read a full score of a modern orchestral work, written in solfa notation, would reduce anyone to a condition of semi-lunacy. Even taking the parts separately the difficulties are greater than in staff notation. In the extract given there are four horns, two in F and two in E. The first notes played by the F horns are A sharp and E sounding D sharp and A. The E horns have C sharp sounding E sharp. In the solfa score the F horns are related to B minor—that is to say, D is considered as doh—the E horns are related to C minor—that is to say, E flat is doh. To read the score, therefore, we are first obliged to consider what se and r are with D as doh in the case of the F horns, what le is with E flat as doh, and then to transpose these notes down a fifth and a sixth. Two processes are necessary instead of one as in the staff notation, while two dohs render the matter more complicated. May we not conclude that in all instrumental work solfa is out of the question?<sup>(10)</sup>

Solfa was intended for, and has been chiefly used in vocal music, but even here there are difficulties not met with in staff notation. The singer, knowing the capabilities of his voice, depends, like the instrumentalist, on the absolute pitch of the notes he sings. So he, too, must turn the solfa syllables into absolute pitch.<sup>(11)</sup> The staff notation shows him at once the compass of the notes he is going to sing, but the solfa notation gives him no idea of the pitch of his notes.<sup>(12)</sup> Until he realises the pitch of every note, he will be unprepared for what is coming, and may be brought to grief at any moment.

But if solfa stands at a disadvantage as compared with staff notation in the work of practical performance does it provide assistance to the theorist? Does it solve any problems? Does it make clear any intricacies that lie hid in staff notation? Tonic solfa is based on the principle of the relationship of sounds to a key-tone, and the key-tone is defined as "the name given to a sound which is chosen to be the governing tone of the tune, and from which all the other six related tones forming the musical scale measure their places." (*Standard Course* p.2.). The mental effects, so dear to the solfaist, arise from

this relationship. And, as Dr. Whittaker says, "a bed-rock principle is that when a modulation of any extent occurs the key-tone is changed, and all sounds are thus related correctly to the prevailing tonic." The key-tone is thus made a central point, and the student's attention is directed to it as the dominating factor in the music. Undoubtedly in musical composition in many cases a key-centre is strongly emphasised. In the works of our classical composers key-balance is an essential principle of construction, and a great deal of our music depends for its effect on the presence of a key-tone as a central point. In such cases the tonic solfa principle is logical and may be useful. But in some modal music and in many of the works of modern composers no definite feeling of a key-centre is given at all. And in the works of our great composers many passages are written purposely with indefinite tonality. In such cases the tonic solfa principle is not only out of place, but may even be harmful, for the student will be given a false key-centre.<sup>(13)</sup> It cannot be right to measure from a note, which in some cases is of predominating importance, in other cases of no importance at all. Good government is not obtained by making a king supreme ruler on some occasions, a mere name at other times. If doh is to be considered as a key-centre, then it must be so in all music. But if it is just a convenient starting point, then a fixed is obviously easier than a movable doh.

The difficulty appears early in the solfa course, when modal music and when the minor mode are reached. The solfaists endeavour to overcome it by appealing to the scale as it appears in staff notation, and ignoring musical effect. A standard common scale is taken founded on C which is called doh. Out of this scale modes may be made—as, for example, the ray mode, in which D is the final note, the lah mode in which A is the chief tone and so on. The lah mode is the minor mode, and a composition in A minor is headed "Key C, Lah is A." The illogical nature of this method is at once evident. If the key is C, then the governing tone "from which all the other six related tones measure their places" must be C. But lah is called the predominating tone. Thus we get in the same composition a "governing" tone and a "predominating" tone—a dualism which leads to curious results. Not infrequently a melody is played or sung, first in the minor, and then in the major mode. The key-centre is the same in both cases, but the key-chord is first minor, and then major. But the tonic solfa notation gives an entirely different set of symbols for the minor and the major, thus conveying the impression of two distinct key-tones. As an example, Schubert's song "Der Wegweiser" may be quoted. The first verse begins as follows:—



In the second verse the melody is repeated in the major, beginning thus :—



The solfa notation gives us these results :—

Ex. 1D.

Key G. Lah is E.

2. J. t. | d. d. : d. d. | d. : l. t. d. | r. d. : t. . |

Ex. 10.

E

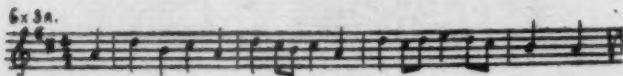
$$: \quad .d, r \quad | \quad m, m : m, m \quad | \quad m \quad : d, r, m \quad | \quad f, m \quad : r, d \quad | \quad r, \quad (14)$$

The matter is not made any better if—as is the practice—the key is given: “Key E minor, Doh is G” conveys the idea that, though the key is E minor, the governing tone from which all other tones measure their places is G. If a student has been accustomed to consider doh as the key-centre, surely he will be inclined to take the same view, when the minor mode is used.

The difficulty is accentuated, when harmony is introduced. If a student is accustomed to think of a perfect cadence as made by the soh and doh chords, how will he understand the same cadence in the minor mode expressed by the me and lah chords?<sup>(15)</sup>

Solfa is supposed to explain difficulties that occur in the staff notation. Presumably this is the case when modulations are made. The change of the doh shows the modulation and gives the new key. But here, again, there is some confusion. We are told that doh is changed when the modulation is of a decided character, not when it is only transitory. But in much music there are constant modulations leading far away from the original key, and yet not of such a

character as to convey a distinct insistence on a key-centre. How are we to deal with such music if we use the solfa notation? To give a new doh for every modulation would cause endless trouble by constantly switching off from one set of relations to another; while to stick to the same doh would give a governing tone probably of no importance in the tonalitive scheme. Even in easy music it may be questioned if it is right to insist on a key in passages that might equally well belong to another key. In the well-known tune "The Vicar of Bray," the fifth line runs as follows:—



Musical education should be contrived in one continuous sequence so that one step leads on to another. The teacher should keep in his mind future possibilities, or he will never succeed in training his pupils to become good musicians. But what chance has a pupil to attain great heights if, at the beginning of his career, his feeling for tonality is hopelessly injured?<sup>(17)</sup> The proper way to judge what keys are entered is by the effect of the music on the ear.<sup>(18)</sup> But if certain modulations are ignored, while others are strongly insisted on in the notation, the student will be led into all sorts of predicaments and his feeling for musical effect will be damaged. In harmonising a tune he will be swayed by his experience of solfa notation, and will not realise the different possibilities that occur even in simple melodies. The principle of relationship of tones to a key-centre can only be possible when the tonality is absolutely clear and well defined.

But it may be said—and Dr. Whittaker reluctantly concurs—that solfa was never intended to supersede staff notation,<sup>(19)</sup> but simply to lead up to it, that its object is to train the ear to an appreciation of musical sounds, so that the student may be able to sing at sight readily and accurately when he learns from staff notation. There is no doubt that great credit is due to John Curwen for his insistence on the training of the ear. It is due to this fact that many musicians have experimented with solfa, and are inclined to look with favour on John Curwen's ideas. Teachers have neglected this most important branch of musical education so much that the belief has arisen that it is only by solfa methods that good results can be obtained. But in reality the fault lies, not in the staff-notation, but in the teacher. Obviously students who have received some training under solfa methods will be able to sing at sight better than staff-notationists who have received no training whatever. But it does not follow that solfa is better for this purpose than the staff. An experienced cricketer armed with a broomstick is likely to get more runs than a novice using a Hobbs' bat, but we cannot argue that the broomstick is the better weapon. Dr. Whittaker says that "if a young pianist is asked to sing C.A.G., the names are first translated mentally into positions on the keyboard, and then (if they can be sung at all) are reproduced." But a pianist, who had received any training whatever in musicianship, would not have the smallest difficulty in singing C.A.G., and certainly would never think of the key-board at all. A child should not be allowed to play until he has a very good idea of the effect of the sounds he is going to produce.

In reality solfa in its endeavour to promote sight-singing tends to injure musical feeling.<sup>(20)</sup> The solfaists begin their system of education by impressing the supposed mental effects of the sounds in the



scale. Doh, the key-tone, is the strong or firm note, fah, the fourth of the scale, the desolate or awe-inspiring note, lah, the sixth of the scale, the sad or weeping note. But, as every musician knows, the effect of the notes in the scale is conditioned by their position in the rhythmic scheme, and by the harmony either written or implied, that accompanies them. Lah is the third of the sub-dominant chord, and occupying an important position in the phrase—as, for example, at the end of the second line of "Auld Lang Syne"—is anything but sad or weeping. Even doh when it is a dissonance leading down to the note below is not firm or strong. A fatal fault in the system is that it works note by note, not taking into account the effect of the whole phrase.<sup>(21)</sup> A pupil may be able to sing at sight by this method, but he will never go far as a musician, for it is only by grasping the effect of whole phrases that the language of music can be understood. The solfaist by considering the effect of the sounds in their relation to a central tone, and not in their relation to the whole phrase, destroys the meaning of the music with which he is occupied, and causes the pupil to adopt a false perspective, which is difficult to eradicate.

Moreover the spectre of absolute pitch, which haunts the follower of solfa methods in other parts of his work, rises up against him when he deals with the subject of ear-training.<sup>(22)</sup> The power of recognising sounds from their pitch is a species of musical memory, and, like all other memory activities, varies in different individuals. Some children quickly learn to identify a sound by its pitch; with others there is more difficulty; but most children have some kind of pitch-memory. If this memory is to be brought to produce good results, it must be cultivated at an early age; it becomes more difficult to acquire as years go on. The solfaist, by using the same syllables for notes differing in pitch, destroys any sense of pitch-memory a child may possess.<sup>(23)</sup> If doh is C one day, D the next, and F the next, what possible chance has a pupil to fix in his mind the pitch of any note? But, if the name is always associated with the sound, many children will recognise the sounds they use most frequently by their pitch, and bit by bit the memory for absolute pitch will be acquired. There is no doubt that the possession of the pitch-memory is a great asset. Experience has shown that by teaching from the staff-notation on a chordal basis with the addition of unessential notes of all kinds, by using the phrase as the unit of musical thought, and by encouraging the feeling for pitch, a teacher can cultivate the pupil's ear to such an extent that any melody can be sung at sight, any chordal progression can be identified by ear, and the keys through which a musical composition passes can be named with ease.<sup>(24)</sup> Even where the

sense of absolute pitch is imperfectly developed a great deal can be done. Where there is no such sense pupils can be trained to at least as much proficiency as can be obtained by solfa methods. Solfa has the advantage in that it deals with one key only, while staff-notationists have to learn all keys, but the advantage is dearly bought if the feeling for pitch is ruined. And if solfa is applied to the staff in any case all keys must be studied.

Supposing that the sole end and object of music teaching were to enable pupils to sing hymn-tunes and easy music at sight, solfa would have a practical value. But, if it is wished to advance to the higher branches of music, solfa will be found to be inadequate. A system that leads only to a closed door cannot do much to further the cause of music.<sup>(185)</sup>

T. H. YORKE TROTTER.

### DR. WHITTAKER'S COMMENTS

If any reader will do me the honour of perusing my two articles again I think he will find there a complete answer to all legitimate doubts. However, for the sake of emphasis I will deal very briefly with a few points.

(1) But  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \\ s \\ m \\ d \end{array} \right.$  conjures up to the solfaist the same mental effect as  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} C \\ C \\ E \\ C \end{array} \right.$  to the staffist!

(2) Mental effect is only used as an early teaching principle. No solfaist claims that these effects are found in every passage, and if any teacher analyses errors in reading, he will find that these principles of early tuition are valuable.

(3) Only the elementary student considers notes from the point of view of absolute position. All musicians *think* in key, perhaps not very definitely, but the idea is always at the back of their minds when playing or singing. Does not a piano teacher train his pupils to observe keys so as to simplify reading and memorising and induce more intelligent playing? Absolute pitch is only one factor in the situation. I recently asked an excellent violinist his opinion of the difficulty of a certain piece of modern music. His answer was:—"Technically it is not troublesome, but I find it very difficult to play in tune." But the absolute pitch of every note was given! According to Dr. Trotter's theory nothing else was necessary. Solfa gives the very thing that the player has to decide for himself in many complicated and varied circumstances.

(4) Paragraph 5. Wind players temper their notes continually by the principle of key relationship. They would not otherwise be able to play in tune.

(5) But, for instance, key A flat,  $d\ r\ m\ t\ s\ l\ t\ d'$ , calls up in one's mind the appropriate fingering just as easily as A flat B flat C D flat E flat F G A flat.

(6) But it does not. We have to add phrase signs which are applicable to both notations. Hugo Riemann tried to indicate full rhythmic grouping in his editions of the classics, with the result that they are almost unusable. Try to play a simple Haydn sonata or a Bach fugue from these editions and the impossibility of indicating full rhythmic grouping without unduly complicating the notation is realised.

(7) A solfaist no more reads notes one by one than a staffist does. A staffist trying without much familiarity to read solfa may do so, but the experienced solfaist does not, any more than he examines every single letter of a passage of prose. Moreover solfa teaching is *always* by phrase right from the very earliest days. Children when learning singing connect notes and build phrases in a way that is impossible for a juvenile pianist who picks out notes.

(8) This is, again, merely a staffist's view of an unfamiliar language.

(9) Any schoolboy not yet in his 'teens can demonstrate in five minutes the advantages of the metric system. The fact that the British nation rejects it is no evidence of any merits in our cumbersome system of money, weights, and measures, but an acknowledgment of our conservatism.

(10) Here Dr. Trotter entirely misunderstands the situation, and sets up imaginary nine-pins for the joy of bowling them over. One of the first essentials of score-reading is to learn how to eliminate the unnecessary, to see at a glance which instruments are playing in unison or octaves (or, in modern scores, 5ths, 7ths, etc.). The redundant lines are then no longer read; they are taken for granted. A conductor does not think of the notes his transposing instruments are reading, but of the sounds they are producing. If he tells himself when conducting the National Anthem:—"Now the violins are playing G, G, A, F sharp, G, A, and the clarinets in A are reading B flat, B flat, C, A, B flat, C, and the trumpets in D are reading F, F, G, E, F, G," then he would not merely be reduced "to the condition of semi-lunacy," but he would be in a state of complete mental obliquity from the beginning. To repeat, the conductor thinks of the *sound* being produced, and leaves the notation to the performers, just as he does the question of fingering and blowing. From time to time there are articles in musical papers suggesting that orchestral scores should be published in a simpler notation for the sake of the general reader, indicating the exact notes the transposing instruments are playing, and leaving the present method of score reading to professional conductors. That plan is exactly what solfa does. It tells the reader at a glance what notes are being played, without surrounding them with a bewildering mystery of strange signatures, clefs, and transpositions.

(11) This means then that if a choir flattens a semi-tone during any unaccompanied piece, every singer must think of the semi-tone below the printed notation and must mentally transpose, say, from C to B. Perhaps one person in a hundred may find it necessary, but the others do not. They sing by key relationship.

(12) But it does. The key is given.

(13) This means that although a notation helps in 99 cases and does not in the hundredth, we should prefer another notation which helps in the hundredth (or, at any rate, is not worse) and does not in the 99.

(14) The formula "Key C, I is A," was adopted because tonic-solfaists made their terms more definite than they are in the loose terminology of staff. "Key" did not mean the major scale, but a group of notes out of which all modes were selected. This, of course, is the true historic view. "Modulation" to them did not mean change of key, but change of mode. The term "transition" was kept for change of key. Dr. Trotter uses the term "key" in the staff sense and blames the tonic-solfaists for not using it in his way. It is totally wrong to say that solfaists ignore musical effect. Their whole teaching is based on it. No difficulty occurs at all in teaching modal music if the teacher knows his business. I taught class-singing for many years in secondary schools, and found the minor mode was easily mastered. Besides, does not a piano teacher teach major scales first and then minor afterwards?

(15) In solfa you have one notation for the major perfect cadence, and one for the minor perfect cadence. In staff, with key signatures, you have 14 methods of expressing the first, and 15 of expressing the second, to say nothing of the dozens of ways when the signature differs from the key being used at the moment.

(16) The tonic solfaist distinguishes between perfect and imperfect methods of writing transitions, the latter being applicable to passing changes. These are so slight that the feeling of key centre is scarcely disturbed at all.

(17) If tonic solfa has ever injured anybody's feeling for tonality, I should be glad to meet that person.

(18) Nearly all the best harmony students I have ever had have been solfaists. Exactly. And solfa shows what effect the music has on the ear. Staff shows only the absolute pitch.

(19) I never said this. John Curwen hoped that it would. I merely said that nowadays we do not expect that it will.

(20) This does not require argument. I simply defy Dr. Trotter to prove it. (21) This is merely an assumption without any foundation on fact. No solfaist ever works note by note. The whole of the paragraph is based on this false assumption.

(22) Any examiner will bear out the statement that the majority of piano students find ear-tests difficult. A friend who has the ear training classes in a school of music tells me that candidates for examinations, such as the Associated Board, higher grade, and final, and even professional diplomas, come into the class totally unable to do ear-tests which are simple to the elementary school child who is taught by the solfa method. The elementary school teacher gets his children to acquire these things, whereas the average professional musician does not. How many spectres should haunt the latter?

(23) This also is an extravagant statement which Dr. Trotter will have to prove before anybody will believe it.

(24) A housewife is certainly able to clean a carpet by means of a brush and shovel, but her life is much healthier and happier and the work better done if she uses a vacuum cleaner. Why use difficult plans when easy ones lie ready?

(25) We might as well say that John Dowland was no musician because he wrote in Lute tablature. Solfa is the finest introduction to the staff, and the study of both is immeasurably superior to the study of one. The final paragraph seems to suggest that I preached a different doctrine altogether.

Give me the students whose "feeling for tonality is hopelessly injured," who are "swayed by the experience of solfa-notation," whose "musical feeling" is "injured," who are haunted and confronted with this dread "spectre of absolute pitch," whose "sense of pitch knowledge" has been destroyed, all by the terrible blight of solfa, and Dr. Yorke Trotter is welcome to the rest. He may be able to teach them all he professes; I don't doubt it; but I should have the happier time.

W. G. WHITTAKER.

## SCHUBERT

THE loved one, in the great fiery mood, the not asking mood;  
After a century still the greatly loved one;  
But the true Celt in him wholly was undone  
By his Fate; storms tossed him half out of his good.  
One reads and loves the story of his short stay;  
Early rising, Beethoven-following and the rest—  
(Only the peasant wants our liking, quick maker, the guest  
Of beer-drinkings)—he the player of pipes, of first day  
The Lover, and of stars; true one, faithfullest and shyest.  
One holds him but as part of what was to be,  
Square shaper, bender of metal, happy in task.  
The known figure in Vienna grows comradely  
With five continents, and but great honour to ask—  
Would Death take all too soon what was of Europe's own?  
(Although lacking the greatness of the high maker's starkness.)  
Yes, indeed, like Keats, Shelley, and the divine Mozart  
Death cared no more for him or us than to break heart  
With rape-of-beauty—hiding for ever under darkness  
Mind of the "Erl-King" and the East wind's hurt sighing;  
The Unfinished Symphony—and a hundred things more of pride  
Or natural truth. Since Marlowe or perhaps John Fountain died  
Perhaps the world suffered never so—heart had not such denying.

IVOR GURNEY.



## THE LEIT-MOTIF SINCE WAGNER

THE idea of the leit-motif, in some form or other, dates back to Mozart, at least. The device of referring to music already heard in connection with a particular situation, when one wishes to remind the listener of that situation, is so obviously effective that musicians with the feeling for dramatic effect which Mozart and Weber possessed could not fail to realise its value. Wagner saw it too, but was not content like his predecessors, to employ the leit-motif only at climaxes of emotional intensity. One wishes he had been, for in reducing the use of leading themes to a system he deprived them of their most valuable property—dramatic subtlety.

In its original form, a simple melodic reference, the psychological effect of the leit-motif is subtle in the extreme. Used with the typically Teutonic logical completeness of Wagner, as in the "Ring," nothing could be more obvious. I am not one of those who would quarrel with music-drama because it is not logical and with the leit-motif because it is, but Wagner was, notoriously, as unimaginative in matters of dramatic effect as a modern film-producer. He could never bear to let a situation make its own effect, but must always point it out and underline it and throw a spot-light on every detail. To do him justice, however, he never forgot the power of the leit-motif to suggest to the hearer's mind thoughts and ideas which could not be expressed in any other way. An excellent example of this occurs in Act II, Scene 3 of "Die Meistersinger," where the orchestra by recalling Walther's song in the first act



tells us quite clearly what is passing through Eva's mind



while Sachs is only talking about her shoes, although the dialogue as yet has given us no hint of her real thoughts. It is in such subtle touches as these that the leit-motif shows itself at its best.

But in Wagner's hands it really became more than a mere dramatic device and, in his mature work forms the basis of the very structure of the musical fabric. It is in this latter capacity that by far the greater part of its modern use is made. Both aspects of the device are seen at their best and worst in the "Ring." In the tetralogy far from being an excrescence, it is a vital element in the structure; its character had suffered a vital change. The multiplicity of motives necessitated the invention of themes of minor importance, corresponding to the subordinate themes in a symphonic structure. Aesthetic considerations, forbidding that these should be of equal importance with the chief themes, with the limitations of human inspiration, resulted in the creation of a number of motives which are obviously little better than manufactured formulæ. Even the quite important "Ring" theme



is really nothing more than an arbitrary succession of notes which we associate with the "Ring," partly because we have heard it when the "Ring" has been mentioned and much more,

because we have been told that it is the "Ring" theme. To take another instance, of a slightly different character: when the "Sword" theme first flashes out in Act I. of "Die Walküre," at the point where Sieglinde tries in vain to draw Siegmund's attention to the sword, its significance is totally lost on the listener because the theme in itself is not suggestive of any concrete object. Later, with its shimmering tremolo accompaniment it is the exact complement of the sudden flash of light on the blade, on the stage, yet even at this point, the music paints the *flash* rather than the *sword*. Hence the dragging in of this arpeggio of a common chord at every mention of a sword is decidedly inappropriate; more, it is wearisome. A theme like this which is admittedly startling when used at dramatic moments is not musically strong enough to bear so much repetition, without *development*, and it is a fairly safe rule that the effectiveness of any leading theme, however strong musically, decreases in exact ratio to the frequency of its use. Such are a few of the defects of the leit-motif system at the highest degree of perfection at which Wagner left it, and it is necessary to emphasise them, however obvious they may be, before proceeding to the consideration of the attempts of later writers to avoid them. Put briefly, the problem, by no means yet satisfactorily solved, is to use themes which may be recognisable as musical symbols for something or somebody, in themselves and not needing any external explanation—for there is obviously something wrong with an art which is in itself incomprehensible.

It is only to be expected that the first efforts of the Wagnerian camp-followers should be far inferior to those of the master, the more so, as the chief of these were Latins and men of totally different ideals—if they had any at all. The leit-motif was the most obviously useful weapon in the Wagnerian armoury and every operatic composer of the end of the last century eagerly seized it. But with what miserable results!

Bizet had, while Wagner was still living, experimented with the leit-motif idea, in "Carmen," but his premature death prevented his developing the device in a later work. The principal theme, that of the heroine herself



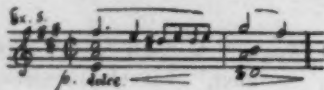
is sufficiently striking and is used with remarkable moderation, but, on the other hand, its treatment is very crude. The latter failing is

a deadly one. Without genuine development, leit-motives are indeed lifeless, and it is in their symphonic treatment, with harmonic and rhythmic changes (as in the handling of the cry of the Rhine-maidens):—



and all the other classical devices of theme-transformation, that Wagner still maintains an unchallenged superiority. In the contrapuntal combination of themes, too, Wagner's magnificent welding of motives into such wholes as the "Fire-Charm" music of "Walküre" or Siegfried's "Rhine Journey" contrasts powerfully with Charpentier's clumsy workmanship in "Louise." Whereas Wagner welds his themes, Charpentier can only force them together by sheer violence.

Verdi, too, though working on very different lines, introduces leading-themes in his Shakespearean masterpieces. They are in no way used as *structural* devices but, with wonderfully effective restraint, to enhance the effect of dramatic climaxes only. Indeed, the poignant quotation of what we may call the "Kiss" theme, from the Love-Duet in Act I. of "Othello":—

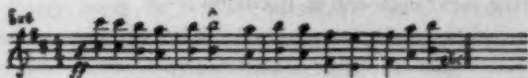


in the scene of Desdemona's death in Act. IV. is one of the most masterly examples of the use of the device, in its earliest form, in musical literature. Its moving effect will be forgotten by none who have heard it.

Unfortunately, Verdi's immediate successors in the field of Italian opera were lacking in everything but power of dramatic (usually melodramatic) expression. Beauty, subtlety, and every artistic

principle were sacrificed or subordinated to the requirements of cheap histrionics. The vulgarity of the leit-motif as employed by such men as Mascagni and Leoncavallo has never been surpassed. Their discarding of it as a structural device was no backward step, as a matter of fact their action has plenty of justification on æsthetic grounds, but, apart from the utter banality of the themes, the technical crudity of their employment is astonishing. Never developed, seldom even modified, motives expressing the most violent of human emotions, usually "revenge," "despair" or "jealousy," are blared out on every second page to the accompaniment of terrific orchestral storms. So employed, they seldom fulfil even the primary and most obvious office of the leit-motif—that of heightening dramatic effect; for, regarded simply as musical symbols, they are too obviously mere tags, devised mechanically and employed mechanically, without art or emotional impulse.

Puccini, in his earlier works (*c.f.*, "Tosca," "La Bohème," &c.), had shown little more skill than his compatriots, but in "Madame Butterfly" there are, at least, not infrequent gleams of a higher artistic sense. The motives are sufficiently numerous and so well patched into the rather tenuous thread of the orchestral structure as to deserve to be recognised as quite Wagnerian in aim. The use of "The Star-spangled Banner" as a "Pinkerton" theme was a mistake, and the various motives of death and destruction with the final blaring out of the "Child" theme:—



are as bad as anything devised by Mascagni, but it cannot be denied that the recurrence of the popular "Un bel di, vedremo" melody, at moments when Pinkerton's return is to be brought to one's mind, is perfectly successful from the dramatic point of view. The tune





does not suggest "return"; it could not and does not attempt to do so; but it *does* recall the words which Butterfly has sung to it previously, and the point is scored. Similarly Holst, in "The Perfect Fool," makes humorous play with the theme to which the Wizard sings, "A man like me with a wife like that: No! It wouldn't be proper." There is nothing particularly funny in the music, but the recollection of the words at rather inappropriate moments is irresistibly ludicrous. The whole is, of course, a sly dig at the too logical use of the leit-motif by Wagner and Strauss.

Puccini, however, has seldom been so successful as in this case in "Butterfly," and in "Gianni Schicchi" makes the common blunder of introducing themes before their significance is clear—that is, apparently, pointlessly, and hence uselessly.

It is needless to multiply instances of the many cases in which composers have been content to follow more or less successfully these purely Wagnerian methods of application.

Generally speaking, all composers, with the exception of Richard Strauss, have been content as yet to accept the leit-motif as Wagner left it, with but the slight modifications required by individuality of idiom, but it may be of some interest to consider for a moment its employment in this way by two contemporary British musicians, each differing widely in idiom from each other and from Wagner.

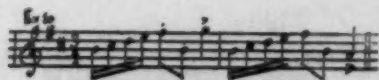
Rutland Boughton's *structures* are frankly Wagnerian. Every character has a definite theme (sometimes more than one) which attempts, in the conventional way, to paint, not perhaps the character actually, but at least the most prominent attribute of the character. Such are the regal horn-call of Eochaidh:—



the other theme, more solemn and a little reminiscent of "Valhalla":



associated with the same character, and the puckish "Herakles" theme in "Alkestis":—



These, whatever their musical value, are, of course, dramatically failures, because they are obviously formulas, external comments on the drama and not a part of it. Of a different nature and, therefore, far more effective are such themes as those of the "laughter chorus":

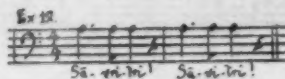


and the Faery song in "The Immortal Hour," which are of the drama, spring naturally from it and whose significance is as obvious as that of the Rhinemaiden's song in the various parts of the "Ring," or of the re-echoing of the Love-Duet in the last scene of "Tristan." One's only objection, but an all-important one, to Boughton's use of the leit-motif is that its "cold logic" is totally unsuited to the naïve simplicity of his musical texture; it would perhaps have been better to have followed the example of Debussy, Delius and others, and reduced the use of the device to an absolute minimum.

Holst, in "The Perfect Fool," has been almost equally conventional, except, as in the case I have previously mentioned, in the fact that his thematic references are sometimes intentionally *mal à propos*. His earlier "Savitri," however, provides us with more interesting examples.

The drama is purely spiritual and correspondingly the motives

stand, not for characters, but for thoughts and ideas. Their significance is usually made apparent by the fact that they are echoes of vocal phrases; such is the (purely rhythmic) call of Death, quiet, but insistent:—



The appeal to the mind is vague and subtle, but so intensely moving that it may be claimed for Holst that he has done as much as anyone, except Strauss, to open up new paths in the use of a now hackneyed method of appealing to the dramatic sense.

To Strauss, however, who is undeniably the greatest and most original of those who have worked on Wagnerian lines in the matters of orchestration and musical texture generally, must be awarded the credit of bringing the leit-motif system to the highest degree of perfection it has yet reached—though he himself has fallen as far from that level as anyone.

"Guntram" is too early a work and too obviously Wagnerian to be very original, and "Feuersnot" must now be recognised as of comparative unimportance, so that "Salome" may be considered as the first of his really great stage-works. Written at the zenith of his curiously unbalanced creative career its workmanship alone is marvellous. Woven, as the score is, entirely from leading-themes, without even such freer breathing-spaces as Wagner allows himself, there must have been tremendous technical difficulty in giving cohesion to the whole; there are many passages in the "Ring" which are so obviously made by mere patching together of themes, which have no organic existence as music, pure and simple, and which seem to betray both a weariness of technique and a hiatus in the flow of inspiration. There are no such passages in "Salome," and, while Strauss's themes never equal in musical value those of Wagner, the former's workmanship enables him to knit them into a fabric so tight, compact and complicated as to make a great deal of Wagner sound rather naïve. Strauss's use of the leit-motives is much more comprehensible, too. With the exception of the hard formula:—

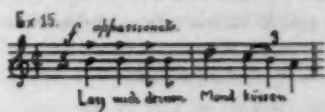


which is the symbol of the Prophet, the sensuous fragments :—



which attempt to paint the character of Salome and other similar *personal* themes, Strauss's motives are never labels attached to concrete objects. In almost every case they are symbols of psychological ideas, their significance being made clear (the singers permitting) by using them primarily as vocal phrases, and hence securing mental association with a verbal sentence.

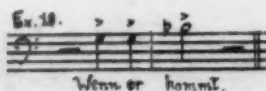
It will be found that practically the whole of "Salome" is built up of such fragments as



which undergoes its final change into :—

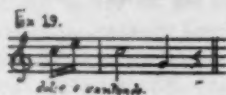


in Salome's insane outburst in the last scene, and many others. Even such a (musically) insignificant motif as :—



which first occurs in Jochanaan's announcement of the coming of One who is stronger than he—" *When He comes*, the waste places shall rejoice; *when He comes*, in that day shall the eyes of the blind see; *when He comes*, the ears of the deaf shall be opened"—becomes irresistibly associated with the idea of Christ's coming, and later is used to bring that idea to our minds when nothing else could do so, in much the same way that Wagner lets us know what Eva is thinking in the "Meistersinger" example, and that Boughton expresses the eerie feelings of Manus and Maive in the "Immortal Hour" by introducing the weird "laughter" theme (Ex. 11) in the orchestra at the end of the Love-Duet between Etain and Eocaidh.

On the other hand Strauss has not always been sufficiently careful to elucidate all the points in his score, and such a barren formula as :



which is supposed to represent Salome's thoughts of Jochanaan, does nothing of the sort because, firstly, we are left in doubt as to its meaning on its first appearance, and secondly, regarded simply as a musical phrase there is nothing in it to suggest *anything* in particular. (As a matter of fact, I believe someone discovered that this particular theme is a bugle call used in the Austrian army.)

This habit (a throw-back to the worst Wagnerian precedents) of using meaningless formulas has so grown upon Strauss that in what we may regard as his last stage-work—the final version of "Ariadne auf Naxos"—he scarcely uses anything else. One may search the score of both prologue and the opera proper without finding a single



theme more illuminating than that of "transformation through love"  
(how Wagnerian that sounds!) :—

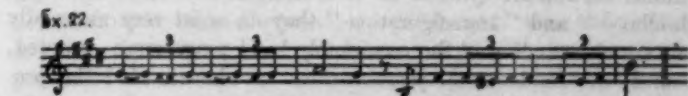


or the one which is supposed to depict Ariadne's love for Theseus :—




But if we wish to study the most interesting phase of Strauss's experiments with the leit-motif we must turn to quite a different means of musical expression—the symphonic poem.

All programme-music demands that its themes shall represent something and are hence of necessity, akin to "leading-themes"; but in the older tone-poems it is usual to find that most of these phrases are used only for a time and then dropped altogether (*e.g.*, the banal "Love" theme, for horns, in Liszt's "Les Preludes") :—



as were the themes of a movement from a classical symphony, which make no further appearance in a succeeding movement. On the other hand, Berlioz, in his "Symphonie Fantastique"—we might almost

say Beethoven with his  motif of Destiny in the C minor Symphony—had used one theme:—



standing for a definite idea in several movements of a work, not as a purely structural device, as Schumann does in his C major and D minor Symphonies and Dvorák in the "New World," but just as Wagner used leit-motives—to point the moral, and not merely to adorn the tale, but actually to help to tell it. We find Liszt working on the same lines in "Mazeppa," "Tasso" and, above all, in the "Hunnenschlacht" and we may even regard the "motto-theme":



of Tchaikovski's Fifth Symphony as a leit-motif, seeing that the work is obviously programmatic. As early as "Don Juan" Strauss had adopted the device, not very successfully, and in "Tod und Verklärung" the whole structure is built up of them. As they are not too numerous and are symbols for such abstract ideas as "memories of childhood" and "transfiguration" they do assist very materially in one's understanding of the remarkably lucid programme—granted, of course, the fundamental postulate that one knows what the programme is. It is obvious, in this connection, that any theme of the mere mechanical formula type, which might serve its purpose in opera, would be utterly useless in a tone-poem. None of the themes of "Tod und Verklärung" are such, but the same cannot be said of those of "Zarathustra" the next symphonic work of Strauss in which he uses the leit-motif—for "Till Eulenspiegel" and "Don Quixote" must be regarded as variations on one or two "motto"

themes. The very first subject of "Zarathustra," that of "philosophic doubt":—

Ex. 25.



is incomprehensible, and, even if one cannot quite agree with Mr. Newman that the "disgust" motif:—

Ex. 26.



no more represents disgust than it does the toothache, it must be confessed that the only theme whose significance is really apparent is that of the plain-song "Credo":—

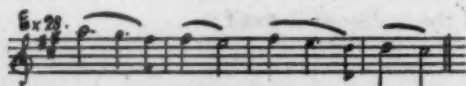
Ex. 27.



*Credo in unum de-um*

which calls to our mind Bach's treatment of it in the B minor Mass. In Strauss's next two symphonic works, "Ein Heldenleben" and the "Domestic" Symphony, we find a very interesting and much more highly developed system of motives—each personal protagonist in the action being portrayed by several themes, each reflecting a particular phase of the character's personality. The musical portrait of the "hero" in "Heldenleben," for instance, is built up of motives which, as is well known, the composer intends to signify the "hero's" nobility, warmth of imagination, etc., and from these with the various "helpmate" and "enemy" themes is woven a musical fabric which in texture differs only from that of a music-drama in the absence of declamatory vocal passages. The same methods are adopted in the "Domestic" Symphony and, except

that the structure is less carefully knit, in the "Alpine" Symphony. This last work, however, suffers from the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic banalities which characterise all the composer's later work, besides the ever-present sin of the meaningless formula. Indeed the thematic poverty of the work is remarkable; a descending diatonic scale in the rhythm  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} | \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} |$  etc., serves as a "night" motif, and that of "sunrise" is equally vapid and jejune:—



Scriabin's theosophical "poems," with their "themes of extasy" and their "dark forces" are really quite lucid in comparison with such empty tags.

There is one other form of musical composition in which the leit-motif has begun to play a part in the last thirty years. It is that hybrid dear to the English heart, a cross between pure drama, narration and reflection, the oratorio; with which we may include its more modest relation the cantata. So much, sense and nonsense, has been written about the imperfections of the oratorio as an art-form that it is needless here to dwell upon its shortcomings. Perhaps its worst fault in its Victorian phase was lack of any real musical unity corresponding to its literary unity, although this latter was by no means always very remarkable. The value of even a single "motto-theme" in binding a work together is amply demonstrated in Walford Davies' "Everyman" in which the sombre "horn of Death" motif:—



plays a deeply impressive part. But the use of the leit-motif in works of this nature is to be chiefly associated with the name of him

who has done more than any other to put new, if only temporary, life into a dying form—Edward Elgar.

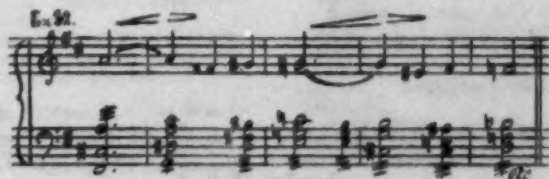
Every great choral work, secular or sacred, that he has written, from "The Black Knight" onwards, is based to a greater or lesser extent on the Wagnerian system. To analyse closely his various successes and failures would be wearisome and unnecessary, for to do so would necessitate the recapitulation of much that I have already written with regard to the work of other composers, but a brief glance at the composer's finest choral work may give us some idea of his methods. The very first theme of the prelude to "Gerontius"—mystic and awe-inspiring :—



is intended to convey the idea of "judgment" and recurs in that sense when the soul is being wafted towards the Divine presence, and later in a more developed form, is used to build up a grandiose climax where, as Mr. Newman says, "the Soul is to be conceived as gazing for a moment on its Lord." Other striking themes which are introduced in the prelude, and which play important parts in the fabric of the whole work, are those of the "Miserere" :—



and of "Despair" :—





both made comprehensible by their literary context in the body of the work.

Finally we may consider a few broad conclusions drawn from a study of Elgar's experiments. Firstly, that the oratorio has through the use of leit-motives achieved real musical unity; secondly, that in a concert-work the recurrence of such themes seems natural and and artistic, whereas in the theatre they are frequently a little irritating in their cold logic; thirdly, that they are far more comprehensible in a cantata than in a wordless work like a tone-poem. That later composers will work on Elgarian lines, however, is highly improbable—for it is by no means likely that they will feel impelled to write cantatas at all. So, too, with the leit-motif system itself. Like the music drama, the tone-poem and the colossal orchestra, it belongs to a past age of musical æsthetics, a phase through which music had necessarily to pass and which has left indelible marks on musical development, but whose characteristics are not consonant with present-day ideals. To the ardent young seeker of "new paths" the leit-motif is in the nature of a fetter; with him it can never be more than a quite secondary means to an end, to be no sooner picked up than discarded, and no longer the over-bearing tyrant into which Wagner, and still more his adherents, temporarily converted it.

GERALD E. H. ABRAHAM.

## REGISTER OF BOOKS ON MUSIC

We intend in future, with our readers' good will, to publish in each number of MUSIC AND LETTERS a list of the more important books on music that have appeared during the preceding quarter. The present list, which is tentative in character, aims at including the chief books, English and foreign, published towards the end of last year and at the beginning of this. The books are arranged in alphabetical order of their subjects. In the absence of information to the contrary it may be assumed that all the books mentioned were published in 1934; the place of publication is not added to the publisher's name if the former is the capital of the country or the latter is very well known.

**Aesthetics.** Baldensperger, P.: *Sensibilité musicale et romantisme*. pp. 136. Les Presses Françaises, 1925.

**Atonality.** Elmert, H.: *Atonale Musiklehre*. pp. vii. 36. Breitkopf.

**Bach.** Gérol, T.: *J. S. Bach*. H. Laurens, 1925. (Les Musiciens célèbres.)

**Beethoven.** Krug, W.: *Beethovens Vollendung*. [A polemic.] pp. 275. Allg. Verlagsanstalt: Munich, 1925.

Nottebohm, G.: *Zwei Skizzenbücher von Beethoven aus den Jahren 1801 bis 1803*. [New ed. in 1 vol. by P. Mies.] pp. vii. 43. 80. Breitkopf.

Sandberger, A.: *Forschungen, Studien und Kritiken zu Beethoven und zu Beethoven-literatur*. Drei Masken Verlag: Munich. (Vol. 2 of the author's "Ausgewählte Aufsätze.")

W. G. Whittaker. *Fugitive Notes on certain Cantatas and the Motets of J. S. Bach*. pp. xii. 299. H. Milford.

**Berlioz.** Tiersot, J.: *La Damnation de Faust*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 160. P. Mellottée.

**Bizet.** Gaudier, C.: *Carmen, de Bizet*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 110. P. Mellottée.

**Bruckner.** Göllerich, A.: *Anton Bruckner*. Vol. 1. G. Bosse: Regensburg. (Expected, when complete, to be the authoritative life of Bruckner.)

Grüner, G.: *Anton Bruckner*. pp. 95. Kistner: Leipzig. (Vol. 51 of the series "Die Musik.")

**Busoni.** F. Busoni: *Werk-Verzeichnis*. [A thematic catalogue.] pp. 62. Breitkopf.

**Charpentier.** Himonet, A.: *Louise, de Charpentier*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 151. P. Mellottée.

**Criticism.** Evans, E.: *The Margin of Music*. pp. 71. H. Milford.

*Von neuer Musik*. [Essays, ed. by H. Grues, G. Krutge, R. Thalheimer.]

pp. vii. 320. P. J. Marcan: Cologne, 1925.

**Damrosch, W.** *My Musical Life*. pp. 384. Allen & Unwin.

**Delibes.** Loisel, J.: *Lakmé, de Léo Delibes*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 219. P. Mellottée.

**Dictionaries.** Hull, A. E. ed.: *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*. pp. xvi. 548. Dent.

Pratt, W. S.: *The New Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians*. pp. 977. Macmillan.

**Durand et fils.** Durand, J.: *Quelques souvenirs d'un éditeur de musique*. Durand.

**Ear Training.** Shinn, F. G.: *Examination Aural Tests and how to study them*. pp. 108. Augener.

**English Music.** Glyn, M. H.: *About Elizabethan Virginal Music and its Composers*. pp. 172. W. Reeves.

Jeboult, H. A.: *Somerset Composers, Musicians, and Music*. pp. 72. Somerset Folk Press.

Walker, E.: *A History of Music in England*. 2nd ed. H. Milford.

**French Music.** Dumesnil, R.: *Le Monde des Musiciens*. pp. 259. (In the series "Paris intellectuel et artistique.")

Hill, E. B.: *Modern French Music*. pp. viii. 408. Houghton Mifflin Co.: Boston and New York.

**Gigue.** Danckert, W.: *Geschichte der Gigue*. pp. iii. 172. Kistner: Leipzig.

**Gounod.** Landormy, P.: *Faust, de Gounod*. [Critical study, with musical analysis.] pp. 160. P. Mellottée.

**Handel.** Leichentritt, H.: *Handel*. pp. 871. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt: Stuttgart.

**Harpsichord.** Pirro, A.: *Les Clavicinistes*. pp. 128. H. Laurens (Les Musiciens célèbres.)

- History.** Adler, G. ed.: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*. pp. xiii. 1097. Frankfurter Verlags-Anstalt.
- Blom, E.: *Stepchildren of Music*. pp. 301. G. T. Foulis, 1925.
- Hadow, Sir W. R.: *Music*. pp. 256. Williams & Norgate. (Home University Library.)
- White, R. T.: *Music and its Story*. pp. viii. 184. University Press; Cambridge.
- Huber.** Bundi, G.: *Hans Huber*. [A biography.] pp. x. 147. Helbing and Lichtenhahn: Basle, 1925 [1924].
- Instruments.** Teuchert, E. and Haupt, E. W.: *Musik-instrumentenkunde in Wort und Bild*. pt. 1. Breitkopf. (To be completed in 3 parts.)
- Libraries.** McColvin, L. R.: *Music in Public Libraries*. pp. 140. Grafton.
- Liszt.** Chop, M. *Franz Liszt's symphonische Werke*. pt. 1. [Analyses of the Faust Symphony, Episodes from Lenau's Faust, and the Dante Symphony.] Reklam: Leipzig.
- Grunsky, K.: *Franz Liszt*. pp. 97. Kistner: Leipzig. (vol. 15 of the series "Die Musik.")
- Lully.** Lully et l'opéra français. pp. 128. (Special number of "La Revue Musicale" for Jan., 1925.)
- Mahler.** Gustav Mahler: *Briefe, 1879-1911*. [Ed. by the composer's widow.] pp. xvi. 498. P. Zsolnay: Vienna.
- Massenet.** Loisel, J.: *Manon, de Massenet*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 170. P. Mellottée.
- Monteverdi.** Prunières, H.: Claudio Monteverdi. pp. vii. 179. F. Alcan. (Les Maîtres de la musique.)
- Mosart.** Abert, H. ed.: *Mozart-Jahrbuch*. [The 2nd annual volume.] Drei Masken Verlag: Munich, 1924 [1925].
- Muris.** Grossman, W.: *Die einleitenden Kapitel des Speculum Musicae von Joannes de Muris*. pp. iii. 100. Breitkopf.
- Musiology.** Lach, R.: *Die Vergleichende Musikwissenschaft*. Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky: Vienna.
- Schweizerisches Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* [Vol. 1. Issued in celebration of the Congress in Basle, Sept., 1924.] Helbing & Lichtenhahn: Basle.
- Notation.** Edmonds, P.: *The Elements of Staff Notation*. [A method of teaching notation.] pp. 72. Pitman.
- Stéphan, J.: *La Notation isotonique*. [An attempt to simplify musical notation. Text in Eng., Fr., and Germ.] B. Leroux, 1925.
- Wolf, J.: *Die Tonchriften*. pp. 136. F. Hirt: Breslau.
- Opera.** Bouvet, C.: *L'Opéra, l'Académie de Musique et de Danse, le Musée, la Bibliothèque*. pp. 52. A. Morancé.
- Genest, R.: *L'Opéra connu et inconnu*. B. de Boccard, 1925.
- Genest, S.: *L'Opéra-Comique connu et inconnu*. pp. xi. 352. Fischbacher, 1925.
- Lütge, K.: *Die deutsche Spieloper*. pp. 190. W. Piepenschneider: Braunschweig.
- Northcott, R.: *Covent Garden and the Royal Opera*. New ed. pp. 136. Press Printers.
- Pfitzner.** Lütge, W.: *Hans Pfitzner*. pp. 75. Breitkopf.
- Piano.** Ruthardt, A.: *Wegweiser durch die Klavier-Literatur*. 10th ed. pp. ix. 398. Hug & Co.: Leipzig, 1925.
- Psychology.** G. Révész. *The Psychology of a Musical Prodigy*. pp. ix. 180. Kegan Paul.
- Puccini.** Coeuroy, A.: *La Tosca, de Puccini*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] P. Mellottée.
- Roussel.** Vuillemin, L.: *Albert Roussel et son œuvre*. pp. 123. Durand.
- Saint-Saëns.** Collet, H.: *Samson et Dalila, de Saint-Saëns*. [Critical study, with musical analysis.] pp. 194. P. Mellottée.
- Scheidt.** Mahrenholz, C.: *Samuel Scheidt, sein Leben und sein Werk*. pp. vii. 144. Breitkopf.
- School Music.** Thomas Wood. *Music and Boyhood*. pp. 66. H. Milford.
- Schumann.** Pitrou, R.: *La Vie intérieure de Robert Schumann*. pp. 240. H. Laurens, 1925.
- Schumann, Clara.** Litzmann, B.: Clara Schumann. vol. 1, 8th ed., vol. 2, 7th ed. Breitkopf, 1925. (Complete in 8 vols.)
- Serbian Music.** Funck-Brentano, F.: *Les Chants populaires des Serbes*. pp. 192. Paris.
- Singing.** Shakespeare, W.: *Plain Words on Singing*. pp. xiv. 119. Putnam.
- Singspiel.** Krogh, T.: *Zur Geschichte des dänischen Singspiels im 18. Jahrhundert*. pp. viii. 299. Levin and Munksgaard: Copenhagen.
- Smetana.** Nejedlý, Z.: *Frederick Smetana*. pp. 154. G. Bles: London.
- Song.** Glossy, B. and Haas, R.: *Wiener Comödientlieder aus drei Jahrhunderten*. pp. xxix. 268. A. Schroll and Co.: Vienna.
- Speyer, W.: Speyer, E.: Wilhelm Speyer der Liederkomponist, 1790-1878**. pp. xv. 454. Drei Masken Verlag: Munich, 1925.
- Strauss, R. Muschler, R. C.: Richard Strauss**. pp. ix. 636. F. Borgmeyer: Hildesheim.

Verdi. Corte, A. della: *Le Opere di Giuseppe Verdi*. II. Otello. pp. 187. G. Monfridi: Milano.

Violin. Greilsamer, L.: *L'Anatomie et la physiologie du violon, de l'alto et du violoncelle*. pp. vii. 238. Paris.

Jacomb, C. E.: *Violin Harmonics: what they are and how to play them*. pp. 83. "The Strad."

La Laurencie, L. de: *L'Ecole française de violon de Lully à Viotti*. [The third and final volume of this important work was published in Oct., 1924.]

Laurie, D.: *The Reminiscences of a Fiddle Dealer*. pp. 192. T. Werner Laurie.

I. M. Somerville. Kreutzer and his Studies. pp. 85. "The Strad."

Wagner. *Briefe an Hans Richter*. P. Zaolnay: Berlin.

Cœuroy, A.: *La Walkyrie de R. Wagner*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 168. P. Mellottée.

Himonet, A.: *Lohengrin de R. Wagner*. [Critical study with musical analysis.] pp. 176. P. Mellottée.

Wolzogen, H. von: *Wagner und seine Werke*. [Selected essays.] G. Bosse: Regensburg.

Weber. Cœuroy, A.: *Weber*. pp. 187. F. Alcan.

Several of the books mentioned above have been received: the reviews are unavoidably held over.

## NEW REPRODUCTIONS

BELOW are lists of gramophone records and player-piano rolls that have come out in the last three months or so. The lists are representative only, not complete. They are inserted here as an experiment, which, if approved, will be continued. "H.M.V." = Gramophone Company, 363, Oxford Street, W. 1, and "Col." = Columbia Gramophone Company, 102, Clerkenwell Road, E.C. 1.

### GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

JAN.—MARCH, 1925

**Bach.** Come, sweet Death. Col. D. 1502 (L. Tertis, viola.)  
Concerto for two violins. Col. L. 1613-5 (Catterall, J. S. Bridge, with orch.)  
Violin Sonata in A, No. 2. H.M.V. D. 939, 40 (William Primrose.)  
**Beethoven.** Quartet in E mi. Op. 59. No. 2. H.M.V. D. 953-6.  
Quartet in F ma. Op. 18. No. 1. H.M.V. D. 947-50. (Catterall quartet.)  
**Brahms.** A mi. Trio. Col. L. 1609-11 (Draper, Squire and Harty.)  
E flat Trio (Scherzo, Trio and finale.) Col. L. 1602. (Catterall, Squire and Murdoch.)  
1st Symphony. Col. L. 1596-1600. (F. Weingartner and L.S.O.)  
**Delius.** Violin Sonata No. 2. Col. D. 1500, 1. (A. Sammons and Howard Jones.)  
**Elizabetan.** Two Songs arrd. by Keel. H.M.V. E. 364. (Ben Davies.)  
Two Songs arrd. by Lane Wilson. H.M.V. E. 366. (Elsie Suddaby.)  
**Franck.** Violin Sonata in A. H.M.V. D. B. 785-788. (Thibaud and Cortot.)

Quintet in F mi., second movement. Col. L. 1690. (Mrs. Losser-Lebert and Léner quartet.)  
**Gounod.** Mirella-Overture. Col. L. 1601. (F. Bridge and N.Q.H. Light Orch.)  
**Mozart.** B flat Quartet. Col. L. 1606-8. (Léner quartet.)  
**Palmgren.** Pinnish Rhythms. H.M.V. B. 1911. (Una Bourne, piano.)  
**Ravel.** Pavane. Col. L. 1605. (F. Bridge and N.Q.H. Light Orch.)  
**Reger.** Marien-Wiegenlied. H.M.V. DA. 632. (Selma Kurz.)  
**Saint-Saens.** Le Carnaval des Animaux. Col. L. 1617-9. (H. Harty and Symp. Orch.)  
**Schumann.** Piano Concerto. H.M.V. DB. 722-5. (Cortot and Roy. Alb. Hall Orch.)  
**Strauss.** Ständchen. H.M.V. DA. 632. (Selma Kurz.)  
**Tchaikovsky.** Francesca da Rimini. H.M.V. D. 951, 2. (Alb. Coates and Symp. Orch.)  
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